

FEELING LOVED, RECEIVING DESIRED LOVING BEHAVIORS, AND
EXPERIENCING RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION
AMONG UNMARRIED COLLEGIANS

By

CRISTINA M. MEJIA-MILLAN

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Cristina M. Mejia-Millan

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Chairman: Martin Heesacker
Major Department: Psychology

A substantial research literature documents widespread problems in romantic relationships, including a high U.S. divorce rate, and many couples seeking counseling. Recent research documents a link between relationship satisfaction and survival and the provision of desired loving behaviors by a romantic partner. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine whether the experience of feeling loved accounts for the link between receiving desired loving behaviors and experiencing relationship satisfaction. The dissertation also is designed to compare the proposed model of feeling loved as a source of relationship satisfaction with two competing models.

Data were collected from undergraduate students in three separate studies. Study 1 examined whether the provision of desired loving behaviors

accounted for a greater proportion of relationship satisfaction than two other models (i.e., the relationship equity model and the relationship investment model). In Study 2, critical incidents affecting relationship satisfaction were collected to assess whether changes in participants' experience of feeling loved were a common theme identified when participants described changes in relationship satisfaction. In Study 3, a free response questionnaire was used to assess whether individuals who receive behaviors that they deem as important to feeling loved will be more satisfied with their relationships than individuals who do not.

Results supported the prediction that the experience of feeling loved moderates the relationship between receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction. Results also support the notion that receiving desired loving behaviors makes a significant, independent contribution to the prediction of relationship satisfaction, over and above equity and investment. Finally, results supported the prediction that receiving behaviors that were deemed as important to feeling loved would be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction. The dissertation discusses some of the important implications of these findings for research and clinical practice.

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

As divorce rates have risen and demand for couples counseling and therapy has increased, clinicians have become increasingly interested in the variable of relationship satisfaction and what may affect its growth or diminution (Spanier, 1979). Two of the most researched perspectives are those of relationship equity and relationship investment. Equity theory posits that people evaluate their relationships according to whether the relative gains and losses within the relationship are distributed equitably (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). Investment theory posits that satisfaction will result when an individual is involved in a relationship in which the investment size is large, and that provides high rewards, involves low costs, and exceeds expectations regarding the quality of close relationships (Rusbult, 1980, 1983).

A third and newer perspective that is explored in this dissertation is that the experience of feeling loved accounts for much of relationship satisfaction. Although equity and investment models are important in understanding relationship satisfaction, this dissertation explores whether the degree to which the experience of feeling loved is a distinct and substantial contributor to relationship satisfaction.

Basis for the Dissertation

Recently, a group of studies have focused on the topic of the provision of loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction (Cawood & Heesacker, 1999; Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994; Heesacker, Smith, & Lawrence, 1998; Samson, 1996). The initial study involved gaining insight into the behaviors that individuals want from a romantic partner in order to feel loved (Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994). In this study, the Desired Loving Behaviors Scale (DLBS) was developed and four factors emerged: Caring Actions, Relationship Support, Scripting, and Sex (Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994; Heesacker et al., 1998).

In addition to the Heesacker and Lawrence (1994) and Heesacker et al. (1998) studies, Lemieux (1996) also focused on examining routine behaviors that are associated with love. Lemieux stated that of the three conceptualizations of love (i.e., love as an attitude, as an emotion, and as a behavior), the behavioral perspective has received the least attention. Thus, he asserted the need for integrating the behavioral perspective into the research on love. He developed a 37-item Love Behaviors Scale to assess the behaviors indicative of expressing love towards a romantic partner. Unlike the four-factor structure of the DLBS, this scale yielded a five-factor structure of behaviors, including Mutual Activity, Special Occasion, Offerings, Selfless, and Sacrifices. It was found that participants considered the behaviors to be related to love. The behavioral focus of Lemieux's research was similar to that of Heesacker, but did not include the factor of relationship satisfaction.

An experimental validation of Heesacker and Lawrence's DLBS was conducted to investigate whether the discrepancy between what individuals want from their partners and what they are getting from their partners would impact relationship satisfaction (Samson, 1996). It was hypothesized that if the discrepancy were small, relationship satisfaction would be rated high. Results supported the hypothesis that there would be a significant, inverse relationship between this "want-get" discrepancy and relationship satisfaction. The second part of the study was directed at reducing the want-get discrepancy by using an intervention in which couples were given suggestions for ways to reduce their want-get discrepancies. A placebo control group and a no treatment control group were included for comparison. It was hypothesized that there would be an increase in reported relationship satisfaction for the treatment group. The experimental manipulation aimed at reducing the discrepancy was ineffective, so no fair test of the hypothesis was possible.

A study is currently being prepared by Heesacker to determine whether a more effective and powerful manipulation, based on the elaboration likelihood model of attitude change (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), will cause attitude and behavior changes that will decrease the discrepancy and, in turn, increase reported relationship satisfaction (M. Heesacker, personal communication, March 20, 1999). Still, in the first part of the Samson study, a link between the want-get discrepancy and relationship satisfaction was supported.

The construct validity of the DLBS was evaluated to allow for a greater understanding of constructs that were related and unrelated to receiving desired

loving behaviors (Cawood & Heesacker, 1999). The study provided evidence that: (a) the DLBS was significantly related to constructs involving relationship adjustment; levels of passion, commitment, and intimacy; and feelings or impressions about a relationship, (b) the DLBS Sex subscale was significantly related to a measure of desire for sexual behaviors, and (c) the DLBS was not significantly related to constructs of outward emotional expressiveness or of the ability to manage interpersonal relationships.

Another study about receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the DLBS, to investigate sex differences in response to the measure, and to explore the causal direction of the DLBS-satisfaction relationship with a cross-lagged panel analysis (Heesacker et al., 1998). The cross-lagged panel study was designed to explore the degree to which relationship satisfaction at Time 1 predicts a discrepancy in what individuals want versus what they get at Time 2, and whether the Time 1 discrepancy predicts relationship satisfaction at Time 2. Results suggest that, at Time 2 (26 days later), the Time 1 discrepancy significantly predicted relationship satisfaction but that Time 1 relationship satisfaction did not significantly predict the Time 2 discrepancy. These results suggest that the DLBS may be used to predict future relationship satisfaction.

Nature of the Dissertation

A primary purpose of the three studies in this dissertation is to collect evidence with regard to whether feeling loved is the mediating factor between receiving desired loving behaviors and the experience of relationship satisfaction

in dating relationships. Another important purpose is to assess whether this feeling loved model of relationship satisfaction adds to the prediction of relationship satisfaction over and above the contributions of two well known relationship models.

In the studies to be reported, the experience of feeling loved was hypothesized to result from receiving desired loving behaviors. This experience of feeling loved was in turn hypothesized to affect relationship satisfaction. Because the construct of love has been so broadly defined and examined (Bierhoff, 1991) and the construct of relationship satisfaction is a complex one, it was appropriate to conduct three different types of studies regarding the nature of the relationship between receiving desired loving behaviors, feeling loved and relationship satisfaction.

Each of these studies has strengths and limitations. However, each study contributes uniquely to the examination of feeling loved, receiving desired loving behaviors, and relationship satisfaction. Study 1 examined whether the experience of feeling loved, as a result of receiving desired loving behaviors, accounts for relationship satisfaction. This study was useful in identifying how important the discrepancy in wanting vs. receiving loving behaviors was in accounting for the variance in both feeling loved and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, the study examined the relative contribution of this model and two other models of relationship satisfaction (relationship equity and relationship investment) in predicting relationship satisfaction.

Study 2 explores experiences that significantly influenced participants' relationship satisfaction and the reasons they felt the experiences had such an impact. The frequency with which participants identified something associated with change in their sense of feeling loved as part of the description was measured. The study identified the proportion of critical incidents in which the issue of feeling loved was mentioned versus another issue (i.e., equity, investment, or something else). This study helps to clarify how individuals explain incidents that influenced their relationship satisfaction in their own words. The design of the study allows for the gathering of subjective data to investigate whether the statements offered mention the experience of feeling loved as being a part of the critical incident. One strength of this set of studies is that they address the key questions using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Study 3 focused on behaviors that individual participants viewed as important in order to feel loved. This focus was created in order to assess whether behaviors that are perceived as more essential to feeling loved have a greater impact on relationship satisfaction than behaviors deemed by participants as less important to feeling loved. This was assessed by examining the discrepancy between desired and received behaviors and the degree to which participants deemed them important to feel loved.

Importance of the Dissertation

This dissertation has important potential implications, particularly for couples, given that relationship satisfaction is of great importance in maintaining relationships and a sense of well-being. The issues being studied were

considered to be vital to research on relationship satisfaction for several reasons. First, if a major aspect of relationship satisfaction is rooted in the experience of feeling loved through the receipt of desired loving behaviors, then practitioners would be well-served to concentrate on the provision of desired loving behaviors. Furthermore, if there are only certain loving behaviors that are important to an individual in order to feel loved, practitioners could focus primarily on those and less on other behaviors.

Additionally, within a couples-counseling setting, attention could be given to the gap between what each partner wants in order to feel loved and what he/she is getting. If there is a marked discrepancy between the two, then relationship satisfaction may be suffering. Consequently, if each partner is made aware of this, steps may be taken to satisfy the wants of each partner, thereby improving relationship satisfaction and creating a more loving relationship for both members of the couple.

Finally, results supporting the idea that an individual's experience of feeling loved is associated with relationship satisfaction may support the acceptance of a new model of relationship satisfaction and may raise questions regarding the adequacy of existing and already accepted models of equity and investment. Furthermore, the behaviors that cause individuals to feel loved may also be behaviors that individuals believe contribute to a sense of equity or investment, suggesting a possible overlap between the newer model and the existing models.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Criteria for Relevant Research

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on the topics of receiving desired loving behaviors, relationship satisfaction, equity theory, and investment. Studies were collected primarily via a computerized literature search of the American Psychological Association's PsychInfo database. The terms "relationship" or "relationship satisfaction" were combined with the following terms: "love," "longevity," "romance," "romantic," "assessment," "scale," "equity," "model," and "investment."

This search produced a large body of literature, particularly in the areas of relationship equity and relationship investment. The following inclusion criteria were utilized for this review: first, the articles must have been directly relevant to the general topic of relationship satisfaction; second within the general topic of relationship satisfaction, articles were included that focused more specifically on the link between satisfaction and (a) love, (b) behaviors, (c) equity, and (d) investment; third, articles were included if they pertained directly to correlations with and causality of a construct closely related to relationship satisfaction (e.g., distress, contentment).

This review of literature focuses first on receiving desired loving behaviors. Following this, the literature regarding the interface of love and relationship satisfaction is reviewed. Next, two alternative models for examining relationship satisfaction are discussed, relationship equity and relationship investment. Finally, concluding statements regarding this review of literature will be presented.

Desired Loving Behaviors

Several studies have focused on the provision of loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction (Cawood & Heesacker, 1999; Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994; Heesacker et al., 1998; Samson, 1996). These studies were based on the premise that if individuals believe they are receiving behaviors from their partners that are indicative of love, then they will experience relationship satisfaction.

The initial study involved gathering information regarding how often individuals would like their partners to do certain things in order for them to feel loved (Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994). A scale was also developed in this study to measure these behaviors. The four categories of behaviors that emerged included: Caring Actions, Relationship Support, Scripting, and Sex. This study tested three hypotheses: (1) responses for men and women would be similar, (2) men would rate sex as more important than women would, and (3) women would rate verbal behavior as more important than men would. Hypotheses 2 and 3 were clearly supported and there was some support for Hypothesis 1 in that men and women did not differ significantly in the degree to which they desired caring actions. Additionally, although there were sex differences for the other factors,

the average for each sex did not differ by as much as one scale point, suggesting a great deal of overlap between men and women.

The development of the thirty-nine Likert-type items of the Desired Loving Behaviors Scale (DLBS; Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994) occurred in two initial steps. First, 282 undergraduate students volunteered to anonymously list answers to the following questions: "What do you want your partner to DO to make you feel loved?" and "What do you want your partner to SAY to make you feel loved?" After the 264 responses were compiled and the redundant items were removed, 158 items remained. Those items were corrected for grammar, made gender neutral, and used in the second study.

In the second step, 302 female and 157 male collegians volunteered to anonymously indicate how often they would like their partners to do or say each of the 158 items in order for them to feel loved. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with values of never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3), often (4), or always (5). Respondents read the following instructions: "What do you want your partner to DO or SAY to make you feel loved? USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO INDICATE HOW OFTEN YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR PARTNER TO DO OR SAY THE FOLLOWING THINGS IN ORDER FOR YOU TO FEEL LOVED." Respondents then indicated their responses directly on the questionnaires or answer sheets. The items were factor analyzed using a principle components factor analysis. A scree test suggested that four factors should be retained. Oblique rotation resulted in 39 items achieving simple

structure on the four factors. The four factors were labeled Relationship Support (10 items), Scripting (10 items), Sex (10 items), and Caring Actions (9 items).

Heesacker et al. (1998) examined the reliability and validity of the DLBS. Test-retest reliability for a sample of 158 college students across a 26-day interval for the DLBS was found to be $r = .65$. For the DLBS subscales, the test-retest reliabilities were as follows: Relationship Support, $r = .55$; Scripting, $r = .57$; Sex, $r = .59$; and Caring Actions, $r = .55$; all $ps < .01$. Internal consistency reliability, calculated using Cronbach's alpha, was found to be .91 for the DLBS as a whole. For the DLBS subscales, the Cronbach's alphas were as follows: Relationship Support, alpha = .90; Scripting alpha = .90; Sex alpha = .91; and Caring Actions alpha = .78.

To validate the DLBS, Heesacker et al. (1998) conducted a study to calculate the correlation between a discrepancy measure (i.e., the difference between what people want from their partners and what they receive) with relationship satisfaction. As predicted, satisfaction decreased as the magnitude of the discrepancy increased. Heesacker et. al. also found that there were significantly higher discrepancy scores across all four subscales for failed relationships when compared with intact relationships.

Additionally, as predicted, a cross-lag panel analysis found that overall discrepancy significantly predicted satisfaction 26 days later ($r = -.51$, $p < .01$; Heesacker et al., 1996). Satisfaction was also a significant predictor of discrepancy 26 days later ($r = -.38$, $p < .01$), and, as predicted, at a significantly smaller magnitude, $t(169) = 2.43$, p (one-tailed) < 0.01 . The patterns of

correlations for the four subscales individually were similar to the above-described pattern of correlations.

Samson (1996) conducted an experimental validation of Heesacker and Lawrence's DLBS consisting of two parts. The first part involved scale refinement. Fifty participants were given two forms of the scale to assess the equivalence of the two versions. Results indicate substantial overlap in the two forms, such that both forms were used in the experiment.

The second part involved the experimental manipulation of the degree to which romantic partners give to each other what they want. It was hypothesized that (1) the discrepancy between what people want and get from their romantic partners in order to feel loved leads to changes in relationship satisfaction, and (2) interventions to reduce this discrepancy will result in lower discrepancy scores in the experimental group as compared to the control group, and, in turn, will be associated with greater relationship satisfaction. Forty-four couples were included in the experiment, 39 of which were retained for statistical analysis. Thirteen of the couples were in a discrepancy-reduction treatment group, 12 couples were in a placebo control group, and 14 couples were in a no-treatment control group.

Results supported the first hypothesis that the "want-get" discrepancy was significantly inversely related to satisfaction. Time 2 discrepancy had a significant inverse correlation with scores on measures of relationship satisfaction, $r(1, 73) = -.1401, p < .01$. This significant inverse relationship was also present when group and couple membership effects were controlled.

The second hypothesis was not supported as statistical analyses indicated that the experimental manipulation aimed at reducing the discrepancy was not perceived by treatment-group participants as intended. The treatment, placebo control, and control groups did not differ on the discrepancy measure, $F(2, 38) = 2.80$, $p < .08$, or on either of the satisfaction measures, $F(2, 38) = 0.34$, $p < .72$, and $F(2, 38) = 0.27$, $p < .77$. In these analyses, couple variance served as the error rather than participant variance. Because the treatment manipulation failed, the experiment did not represent a fair test of the hypothesis that discrepancy causes relationship dissatisfaction.

Cawood and Heesacker (1999) evaluated the construct validity of the DLBS by correlating it with six instruments. Measures were included that were either believed to be related to one of the DLBS subscales or were believed to be measuring a similar construct. The six measures were: (1) the Emotional Expressivity Scale (EES; Kring, Smith, & Neal, 1994), (2) the Interpersonal Communication Competence Scale (ICCS; Rubin & Martin, 1994), (3) the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS; Busby, Christenson, Crane, & Larson, 1995), (4) the Triangular Love Scale (TLS; Sternberg, 1988), (5) the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships Inventory (PAIR; Schaefer & Olson, 1981), and (6) the Sexual Path Preference Inventory (SPPI; Mosher, 1988).

Correlations between the DLBS and the six measures were hypothesized to occur as follows: (1) As scores on the on the EES increase, discrepancy scores on the DLBS would decrease; (2) As scores on the ICCS increase, discrepancy scores on the DLBS would decrease; (3) As scores on the RDAS

increase, discrepancy scores on the DLBS would decrease; (4) As scores on the TLS increase, discrepancy scores on the DLBS would decrease; (5) As discrepancy scores on the PAIR scales decrease, discrepancy scores on the DLBS would decrease; and (6) As scores on the SPPI increase, scores on the Sex subscale of the DLBS would increase.

The study was conducted by administering a questionnaire including the DLBS and the six other measures to a sample of 143 undergraduate students. Results yielded mixed support for the hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported. The EES is a measure of outward emotional expressiveness, or the degree to which individuals believe they demonstrate feelings for others. The ICCS is a measure of the ability to communicate in interpersonal relationships. These results suggest that the DLBS does not tap into the constructs of emotional expressiveness or communication abilities. There was support for the remaining hypotheses. The results indicate that the DLBS is related to a measure of the construct of overall relationship adjustment (RDAS), a measure of passion, intimacy, and commitment (TLS), and a measure of an individual's feelings or impressions about a relationship (PAIR). The final hypothesis was also supported, suggesting that the DLBS Sex subscale (i.e., specific sexual behaviors desired by an individual in order to feel loved) and the SPPI (i.e., an individual's potential for sexual involvement) tap into a similar construct.

Lemieux (1996) explored a similar line of research through his recognition of the importance of focusing on the behavioral aspects of love, beyond attitudinal and emotional aspects. He designed a study to explore behaviors that

are considered to be indicative of expressing love. In order for a behavior to be deemed as "love-related," both partners must mutually recognize the behavior as being indicative of the expression of love.

The study included 337 undergraduate students who completed the Loving Behaviors Scale, a 37-item measure designed to assess the behaviors that an individual considers to be indicative of expressing love toward one's romantic partner. Five factors emerged from the factor analysis. "Mutual Activity" consisted of items involving activities that couples would participate in together (e.g., going to the movies, playing sports together). "Special Occasion" included items indicating love through the presentation of a tangible token on important dates (e.g., birthday card, anniversary gift). "Offerings" consisted of items that would be considered tokens of expressing love within a relationship (e.g., poetry, surprise gifts). "Sacrifices" included things related to doing tasks for one's partner (e.g., cooking meals, doing chores). "Selfless" consisted of items that indicate an openness to participating in a partner's interest (e.g., doing favors for him/her, helping with his/her problems). Results indicated that individuals are able to identify specific behaviors as being related to love.

Love and Satisfaction

Love attitudes and relationship satisfaction were the focus of a study by Hendrick, Hendrick, and Adler (1988). The six love styles that were used were based on Lee's work (1973) and included: Eros (passion), Ludus (game-playing), Pragma (practical), Mania (obsessive), and Agape (altruistic). They found that dating partners would show significant similarity on many variables. Certain love

styles and variables were positively related to relationship satisfaction (i.e., Agape, Eros, Investment) and certain variables were negatively related to relationship satisfaction (i.e., Ludus, Instrumentality). They also found that couples who stayed together differed on several variables from those who broke up.

In a related work focusing on love and satisfaction, Hendrick and Hendrick (1997) asserted that issues of relationship satisfaction are important because of the strong implications for whether a relationship endures or not. They distinguish satisfaction (how the relationship "feels") from adjustment (how the relationship "works"). Much of their research has pointed to "love" as being a major motivator of relationship satisfaction. The authors detail general theories of love (e.g., the sociological perspective, the evolutionary perspective), the love styles approach (described above; Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988), the importance of passionate and companionate love, including cross-generational and cross-cultural findings, and ways of finding and maintaining a loving relationship.

In their discussion of the link between satisfaction and love, the authors acknowledge that love is not the only predictor of relationship satisfaction, but that it is one of the most important predictors of it (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1997). They review several studies that establish a link between love styles and satisfaction (Contreras, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1996; Davis & Latty-Mann, 1987; Inman-Amos, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1994; 1995; Middleton, 1993; Sokolski, 1995). Because Eros (passionate love) was a consistent and strong positive

predictor of satisfaction, the topic of passionate love was discussed more comprehensively, with special attention given to cultural factors and differing age groups.

Bierhoff (1991) reviewed the empirical research focused on love with regard to theory, results, and avenues for future research. He reviewed theories of love and attachment and, similar to the Hendrick articles, discussed theories of love styles. Relationship satisfaction was addressed with regard to significant correlates with the construct. Bierhoff reviewed the data suggesting that satisfaction is correlated with such things as similarity of love styles, romantic love, estimates of the frequency of disagreements, tenderness, communication, perceived trustworthiness of the partner, and relationship fairness. One area of future research suggested by the author is an examination of the topic of a contrast between the correlates of relationship satisfaction and stability and whether they are related to different clusters of variables.

Competing Models

Relationship Equity

Walster, Berscheid, and Walster (1973) presented an extensive discussion of equity theory, including their four propositions that predict when individuals will perceive that they are being treated fairly and what actions they will take when they perceive that they are in inequitable relationships. The Walster et al. (1973) article gives the basis for the application of equity theory to various types of relationships, including intimate relationships.

Equity theory is concerned with fairness in interpersonal relationships and consists of the following four propositions (Traupmann et al., 1981):

Proposition I: Individuals will try to maximize their outcomes (where outcomes equal rewards minus punishments).

Proposition IIA: Groups of individuals can maximize collective reward to evolving accepted systems for equity and will attempt to induce members to accept and adhere to these systems.

Proposition IIB: Groups will generally reward members who treat others equitably and will generally punish members who treat others inequitably.

Proposition III: When individuals find themselves participating in inequitable relationships, they will become distressed. The more inequitable the relationship, the more distress they will feel.

Proposition IV: Individuals who discover they are in inequitable relationships will attempt to eliminate their distress by restoring equity.

The greater the inequity that exists, the more distress they will feel, and the harder they will try to restore equity.

Austin and Walster (1974) conducted a study examining individuals' cognitive, affective, and physiological reactions to equity and inequity. The study was conducted to provide support for the prior propositions of Walster et al. (1973) which stated that distress is experienced by individuals who are undercompensated and overcompensated but that the overcompensated will be less distressed than the undercompensated. The study also explored the effect of expectancy on distress, a model created by Austin (1972) which suggests that

the more that an individual rehearses for an expected stressor, the more prepared for it the individual will be and less distress will be experienced.

Austin and Walster (1974) tested three hypotheses, including that persons in equitable relationships will be less distressed than those who are either underbenefitted or overbenefitted, that persons who are overbenefitted will be less distressed than those who are underbenefitted, and that persons who expected inequity (either overreward or underreward) will be less distressed when inequity is encountered. Participants included 78 female and 39 male undergraduates who completed the Mood Adjective Check List and agreed to galvanic skin measures after being told that they would be involved in a decision making study involving a business scenario. Results supported all three hypotheses, consequently providing support for Walster et al.'s propositions (1973) and Austin's expectancy model (1972).

Walster, Traupmann, and Walster (1978) applied the Equity theory within the context of extramarital sexuality. They hypothesized that equity/inequity should determine how satisfied or distressed individuals are in their relationships and that this would determine how likely they would be to take the risk of having an extramarital affair. They described extramarital sex as an "equity restoration mechanism" in that it may (1) be used by the underbenefitted partner to attain equity, (2) indicate that a partner is ready to leave the relationship because of feeling he/she can do better, or (3) be suggestive of the hopes of attaining equity in an alternative relationship when it cannot be attained in the marital relationship. Data from a Psychology Today study (Berscheid, Walster, &

Bohrnstedt, 1973) was used. The hypothesis that individuals in the inequitable/underbenefitted group would be more likely to have engaged in extramarital sex than individuals in the equitable or inequitable/overbenefitted group was supported. The individuals in the former group had more extramarital activities and began them earlier than individuals in the latter group.

Traupmann, Petersen, Utne, and Hatfield (1981) conducted studies to establish the reliability and validity of the Traupmann-Utne-Walster (TUW) Equity/Inequity Scales, which measure perceived equity in intimate relationships. The Total Inputs Scale included items categorized as Personal Concerns, Emotional Concerns, Day-to-Day Concerns. The Total Outcomes Scale included items categorized as Personal Rewards, Emotional Rewards, Day-to-Day Rewards, and Opportunities Gained or Lost. Reliability for the Total Inputs Scale was found to be .90 and for the Total Outputs Scale was found to be .87.

To assess the validity of the TUW scales, Traupmann et al. (1981) interviewed both partners in 118 couples, most of whom had been married three to eight months. Participants completed the TUW plus additional measures of happiness, satisfaction, distress, and stability in the marriage. Results suggest that individuals both in dating and in married relationships have similar concerns with regard to equity. The major concerns, which are represented by items in the TUW scales, included (1) Personal Concerns, (2) Emotional Concerns, (3) Day-to-Day Concerns, and (4) Opportunities Gained or Lost. Validity assessment of the TUW scales showed that they were predictive of overall affect and of marital satisfaction and happiness.

In a review of the research on equity in intimate relationships, Hatfield, Traupmann, Sprecher, Utne, & Hay (1985) considered issues related to the theoretical debate as to whether equity is applicable to these relationships. The authors describe the background of the debate as stemming from the assumption that equity theory should apply to all relationships, from casual acquaintances to highly intimate partners. Initially, equity theory was supported in studies with individuals in relationships in which they hardly knew the other person. Consequently, theorists suggested that it be applied to intimate relationships. Others disagreed with this perspective because of the beliefs of "the traditional Western view of love involving altruism and selflessness" and that "true love transcends equity considerations" (p.92).

Hatfield et al. (1985) considered empirical research supporting and refuting five hypotheses from Equity theory that apply to intimate relationships. The hypotheses suggested that the more equitable a relationship is, the more compatible the partners within the relationship will be. The hypotheses included the following:

Hypothesis 1: In the early stages of a relationship, couples who believe their relationships are equitable will be more likely to move to a more intimate stage in the relationship than couples in inequitable relationships.

Hypothesis 2: Individuals in equitable relationships will feel less distress than individuals who feel they are receiving far more or far less than they feel that they deserve.

Hypothesis 3: Relationships should become more equitable over time if all things are kept equal.

Hypothesis 4: During times of crisis it is likely that a relationship will become inequitable or unbalanced. Failure to restore equity is likely to lead to the decline and end of a relationship.

Hypothesis 5: Committed relationships that are also equitable will be stable over time.

The literature that the authors reviewed supported Hypotheses 1, 2, and 5. They conclude that there is substantial evidence from the research to state that equity is operational in intimate relationships.

Cate, Lloyd, Henton, and Larson (1982) conducted a study focused on equity, equality, and reward level to assess whether they can coexist in a relationship and whether they can predict relationship satisfaction. The study included 337 students who completed a questionnaire. The authors then reanalyzed data from the Walster, Walster, and Traumpmann (1978) study involving equity and relationship satisfaction. Results indicated equity and equality often coexist in relationships and that reward level predicts relationship satisfaction better than equity or equality.

In a related study, Lloyd, Cate, and Henton (1982) studied whether equity and rewards can predict satisfaction in participants (325 college students) divided into groups according to their dating status (casual or intimate). Participants completed questionnaires which included measures of equity, relationship satisfaction, and reward level in six resource areas (i.e., love, status,

services, goods, money, information). Results indicated that relationship satisfaction for the casually involved was significantly predicted by equity and status. For the intimate group, information, equity and love were significant predictors of relationship satisfaction. The predictive power of equity was lower for the intimate group than for the casual group.

Van Yperen and Buunk (1990) studied the relationship between equity and satisfaction in intimate relationships. They hypothesized that men and women would be more satisfied (1) if they were in equitable relationships rather than inequitable ones and (2) if they felt more advantaged than deprived. The authors utilized a longitudinal study in order to further examine the causal relationship between inequity and dissatisfaction, as well as to assess the extent to which equity is a stable characteristic in a relationship. They used both global and detailed measures of equity.

At time 1, participants were 299 men and 437 women, including 259 couples. At time 2, 171 couples comprised a subsample of the time 1 couples. The participants completed a questionnaire about marital relationships. Results supported the hypotheses that equitable relationships were favored over inequitable relationships and that those who reported being underbenefitted by their relationship were dissatisfied. Support was also found for the idea that inequity produces dissatisfaction with the relationship but that dissatisfaction does not produce inequity. There was no support for the prediction that equity increases over time. Additionally, the authors found that a global equity measure

did not represent a summation of all pertinent inputs and outputs, but that individuals restrict themselves to only a few salient inputs and outputs.

In a study by Lujansky and Mikula (1983), equity theory was not supported. The study included 92 male students involved in a steady dating relationship lasting between three and 18 months. The participants initially completed a questionnaire of aspects of their relationship. Five months later they were contacted to see whether the relationship was maintained and to complete a shorter version of the initial questionnaire. The hypotheses that there is a higher quality and stability in dating relationships that are deemed equitable than the relationships deemed inequitable were not supported. The authors also questioned the validity of the various equity measures and found that none of the several different indices of equity successfully predicted relationship quality and stability.

Relationship Investment

Rusbult's investment model (1980; 1983; 1998) has been widely researched with regard to relationships. Rusbult asserted that it may be used to predict satisfaction with and commitment to ongoing relationships (1980). The Investment Model developed out of Interdependence Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and utilizes constructs from the theory to examine relationship persistence (Rusbult, 1998).

Interdependence Theory is based on the interdependent nature of a relationship rather than the personal dispositions of persons involved in the relationship. The level of dependence refers to the degree to which a partner

relies on the relationship to attain a desired outcome. This theory asserts that there are two main processes by which dependence grows. First, dependence will increase to the extent that an individual experiences satisfaction within the relationship. Satisfaction in this case refers to the extent to which a partner fulfills and individual's needs. Second, dependence will be affected by the availability of high quality alternatives (i.e., whether outside alternatives exist to satisfy an individual's needs better than they would be satisfied by the partner).

The Investment Model extends the Interdependence Theory in two ways (Rusbult, 1980; 1983). First, in addition to satisfaction level and alternative quality, the factor of investment size should have an impact on dependence. Rusbult (1998) defines investment size as the "magnitude and importance of the resources that are attached to a relationship-resources that would decline in value or be lost if the relationship were to end" (p. 359). Resources that are invested may be direct (e.g., sharing feelings with a partner) or indirect (e.g., mutual friends, shared material possessions). Individuals who invest in a relationship are presumed to be more committed to the relationship because the costs of ending it are greater (due to the investment).

The Investment Model also extends the Interdependence Theory by asserting that increased levels of dependence result in increased commitment to a relationship. Rusbult (1998) refers to commitment level as "intent to persist in a relationship, including long-term orientation toward the involvement as well as feelings of psychological attachment" to a partner (p. 359). Commitment differs from dependence in that dependence represents a basic relationship quality of a

state of wanting the relationship to endure, of needing it to endure, and of lacking choices other than having it endure (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). As this state of dependence increases, commitment develops as “a sense of allegiance that is established with regard to the source of one’s dependence” (Rusbult, 1998, p. 360). Commitment level mediates the probability of a relationship enduring through the basic elements of dependence (i.e., satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size). These components comprise what is called the Investment Model of Commitment Processes. Much empirical literature has been devoted to examining the Investment Model.

Rusbult (1980) tested the Investment Model with two studies. In the first study, 171 students read a role-playing essay describing a relationship scenario asking the question of whether an individual should stay in the current romantic relationship or start to date someone else. The four independent variable manipulations included relationship cost, alternative outcome value, investment size, and sex of participant. Results indicated that increases in investment size increased commitment to a relationship while the increase in value of alternatives decreased commitment and relationship costs did not significantly affect it. Additionally, satisfaction significantly increased as relationship costs decreased.

The second study was designed to assess the ability of the Investment Model to predict commitment and satisfaction in relationships through the administration of a questionnaire related to ongoing romantic associations to 111 students. Results indicated that satisfaction was predicted by relationship

rewards and costs. Commitment increased when rewards and investments increased and when alternatives and costs decreased.

In a longitudinal study of heterosexual dating relationships, the Investment Model was tested with regard to the development of satisfaction and commitment over time (Rusbult, 1983). Thirty-four students responded to questionnaires measuring the components of the Investment Model. The 12 questionnaires were completed every 17 days. Results indicated that increases in rewards over time led to increases in satisfaction but that variations in costs did not affect satisfaction. Commitment was increased with increases in satisfaction, declines in the quality of available alternatives, and increases in investment size and rewards. Changes in costs had no impact on commitment. Additionally, for individuals who remained in their relationships, there was a reported increase in rewards, costs, satisfaction, investment size, and commitment, and a decrease in alternative quality, in comparison with individuals who ended their relationships. Rusbult suggested that entrapment occurs when an individual reports little increase in satisfaction at the same time as a decline in alternatives occurs and investments continue to be heavy. Results suggested that changes in commitment over time influence whether a relationship will continue or not.

Rusbult, Johnson, and Morrow (1986) conducted a cross-sectional survey to assess the generalizability of the investment model. Participants received a questionnaire in the mail to complete. This was done to obtain data from a more heterogeneous population of adults in longstanding romantic relationships, in

contrast to the previous studies including only college students. The investment model was supported with regard to satisfaction and commitment in that satisfaction was positively related to rewards, and commitment was positively associated with rewards, satisfaction and investment size and negatively associated with alternative quality. However, costs were not significantly associated with either satisfaction or commitment. This study indicated that the model may be generalized across a broader range of individuals with regard to age, education, and income, as well as for men and women, married and single persons, and relationships of varying durations.

A study by Bui, Peplau, and Hill (1996) also tested the Investment Model in a 15-year longitudinal study. They collected data from both partners in 167 relationships. Results indicated that a significant portion of relationship satisfaction was accounted for by rewards and costs and a significant portion of commitment was accounted for by satisfaction, investment size, and quality of alternatives. Additionally, responses for men and women were found to be similar. Although there was mixed evidence of the mediational role of commitment in predicting relationship duration, the model successfully predicted relationship duration over the 15-year period.

Although empirical evidence supported the Investment Model, there was no published scale to measure its components. Rusbult, Martz, and Agnew (1998) designed the Investment Model Scale to measure commitment level and the three components of dependence (i.e., satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size). Results from a series of three studies

supported the internal consistency of the items measuring each construct. The scale variables were found to be moderately associated with measures of high quality relationship functioning and unrelated to measures of personal disposition. Additionally, the variables predicted later levels of dyadic adjustment and relationship status (maintained vs. ended).

Whereas most of the research has focused on satisfaction within the confines of the Investment Model, Kurdek (1991) focused primarily on relationship satisfaction in gay and lesbian couples who were cohabiting. The study included 75 gay and 41 lesbian cohabiting couples. Results showed that the mean level of model variables and the strength of the correlates of relationship satisfaction rarely differed between the gay and lesbian couples.

Kurdek (1991) proposed a model which demonstrated a mediational model of relationship satisfaction. In this model, the mediational effects of a contextual model, investment model, and a problem-solving model were measured to assess their respective impacts on relationship satisfaction. The contextual model was represented by four individual difference variables related to the construct of relationship satisfaction: satisfaction with social support, expressiveness, general dysfunctional beliefs regarding relationships, and self-consciousness. The problem-solving model, which predicted that satisfaction is related to conflict-reduction strategies, was represented by six problem-solving strategies: positive problem solving, conflict engagement, withdrawal, stubbornness, compliance, and defensiveness. The investment model variables

included rewards and costs of the relationship, and discrepancy between the current relationship and an ideal relationship.

The model assumed that each of the models included variables that accounted for variability in relationship satisfaction at different levels of generality (Kurdek, 1991). The contextual model is the most general "because it characterizes persons as coming to an intimate relationship with preset filters through which relationship information is processed" (p. 911). The investment model is more specific than the contextual model but less specific than the problem-solving model, which examines specific evaluations of interactions with a partner in a relationship. Results suggest that the variables from the more specific levels mediated the effects of variables from the more general levels and that all of the variables jointly affected relationship satisfaction.

A study by Sprecher (1988) examined relationship commitment with regard to the predictive ability of variables in the Investment model (including satisfaction and investment size), the Equity model, and social support determinants. Data were collected from both partners in 197 couples. The participants completed a questionnaire consisting of items measuring relationship variables (i.e., commitment, satisfaction, investments, alternatives, social support, equity). Results demonstrated that commitment was significantly and positively correlated with satisfaction and social support and significantly and negatively correlated with alternatives and inequity. The strongest predictors of commitment were satisfaction and quality of alternatives. Investment was the only variable that did not have significant predictive power.

Conclusions

This chapter reviewed the literature relevant to this dissertation with regard to relationship satisfaction in three areas: receiving desired loving behaviors, love, and the competing models of relationship equity and relationship investment. Satisfaction has been linked to each of these topics to varying degrees. Research included in this review supports the idea that relationship satisfaction is a topic that has been widely studied, yet that there is still opportunity to continue investigations that link satisfaction with receiving desired loving behaviors and the experience of feeling loved, and in comparisons of various models of satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY I: RECEIVING LOVING BEHAVIORS VS. EQUITY AND INVESTMENT

Introduction

"Relationship satisfaction" is a term describing an evaluative judgment about an intimate relationship (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1997). It may be more commonly thought of as an individual's subjective feelings about his/her relationship. This construct may have strong implications for whether couples break up or stay together. Examples of factors that may influence relationship satisfaction include: feeling or lacking emotional intimacy; frequency of arguments; and frequency and quality of sexual relations (Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994; Heesacker et al., 1998). Often, when partners do or say things that are desired to feel loved, relationship satisfaction may increase. On the other hand, when partners do not provide those things, relationship satisfaction may decrease.

Many researchers have studied the topic of relationship satisfaction and its correlates. Perhaps the two most influential models relating to relationship satisfaction are: (a) relationship equity (Cate, Lloyd, Henton, & Larson, 1982; Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Hatfield, Traupmann, Sprecher, Utne, & Hay, 1985; Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979; Lloyd, Cate, & Henton, 1982; Michaels, Edwards, & Acock, 1984; Sprecher & Schwartz, 1994; Stephen, 1984;

Traupmann, Petersen, Utne, & Hatfield, 1981; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990; Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978; Winn, Crawford, & Fischer, 1991) and (b) relationship investment (Bierhoff & Grau, 1997; Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996; Fine & Sacher, 1997; Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988; Rusbult, 1983; 1980; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993; Rusbult, Drigotas, & Verette, 1994; Rusbult, Zembrodt, & Gunn, 1982; Simpson, 1987). More recently, a model of receiving desired loving behaviors has been researched (Heesacker et al., 1998; Lemieux, 1996).

Other models of relationship satisfaction focus on an individual's attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) or love style (Lee, 1973). Although individual difference variables, such as attachment and love styles, are important in understanding relationship satisfaction, this dissertation is concerned with situational factors within relationships, rather than individual differences. In other words, the focus of this study is on characteristics of the relationship, rather than characteristics of the individual within the relationship, that predict relationship satisfaction.

Provision of Desired Loving Behaviors

In the case of receiving desired loving behaviors, it was hypothesized that relationship satisfaction is associated with individuals in relationships having a sense that they are receiving things from their partners that make them feel loved. This hypothesis is consistent with prior research reported by Heesacker et al. (1998), as well as by other investigators (e.g., Burleson & Samter, 1994; Canary & Stafford, 1994; Duck, 1994; Guerrero et al., 1993). For example,

Burleson and Samter (1994), in their social skills approach to relational maintenance, asserted that longevity is achieved when the primary functions served by the relationship are discovered and the skills necessary to perform these functions are developed further. Duck (1994) found that routine behaviors of everyday life contribute to the meaning of a relationship. Canary and Stafford (1994) outlined five propositions of relational maintenance through routine and strategic interactions. Guerrero et al. (1993) found that couples reported more maintenance behaviors in escalating and stable relationships than in declining relationships.

The present study contributes to this body of work that demonstrates the importance of specific and ordinary actions in maintaining and improving romantic relationships, as it was hypothesized that receiving desired loving behaviors, as mediated by the experience of feeling loved, will be associated with greater relationship satisfaction.

Relationship Equity

Both relationship equity and relationship investment have been shown to correlate with or lead to relationship satisfaction. In the case of relationship equity, it is hypothesized that people evaluate their relationships according to whether they are equitable or inequitable (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). A relationship is considered inequitable if an individual perceives that the participants' relative gains (or losses) are unequal. The perception of inequity is believed to lead to distress for individuals, which may lead them to feel dissatisfied with their relationships and consequently end them.

In reviewing the literature on relationship satisfaction, it was discovered that a large number of empirical articles were focused on equity. The topic of equity has been used with various populations, including married (Assh & Byers, 1990; Kollock, Blumstein, & Schwartz, 1994; Sabatelli & Cecil-Pigo, 1985; Sprecher, 1986, 1988; Traupmann, et al., 1981; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990; Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Traupmann, 1978), cohabiting (Cate, et al., 1982; Kollock, et al., 1994; Lloyd, et al., 1982; Sprecher, 1986, 1988; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990; Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Traupmann, 1978), and dating (Assh & Byers, 1990; Berg & McQuinn, 1986; Cate, et al., 1982; Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Lloyd et al., 1982; Sprecher, 1986, 1988; Traupmann, et al., 1981; Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Traupmann, 1978) couples. Equity theory has also been applied to different topics of interest, including relationship commitment (Sabatelli & Cecil-Pigo, 1985; Sprecher, 1988), emotions (Sprecher, 1986), cognitive, affective, and physiological reactions (Austin & Walster, 1974), extramarital sexuality (Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978) and premarital sex (Walster, Walster, & Traupmann, 1978).

Equity has been shown to be a predictor of relationship satisfaction (Cate et al., 1982; Cate, Lloyd, & Long, 1988; Davidson, 1984; Hatfield et al., 1985; Hatfield et al., 1979; Lloyd et al., 1982; Roberto & Scott, 1986; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990; Walster, Traupmann, & Walster, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Traupmann, 1978). Another body of research demonstrates that equity, coupled with relationship satisfaction, has been shown to predict relationship commitment

and stability (Berg & McQuinn, 1986; Cate et al., 1985). Both of these bodies of literature are evidence that equity is an important construct in the research on relationships. This study was concerned with equity as a predictor of relationship satisfaction. In contrast with previous literature and consistent with the topic of interest in this study, equity was compared to competing models of predicting relationship satisfaction.

Relationship Investment

Deriving its basis from interdependence theory, the relationship investment model (Rusbult, 1980; 1983), posits that "individuals will be more satisfied with their relationships to the extent that they provide high rewards, involve low costs, and exceed their comparison level, or expectations regarding the quality of close relationships" (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986, p. 82). Investment has been studied as a predictor of relationship satisfaction (e.g., Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988; Kurdek, 1991).

A closely related body of research is based on a model of relationship commitment. This model asserts that relationship commitment and stability may be predicted by investment size, relationship satisfaction, and quality of alternatives, with relationship satisfaction being predicted by rewards, costs, and their expectations (e.g., Bui et al., 1996; Lin & Rusbult, 1995; Rusbult, 1980; 1983; Rusbult, et al., 1986; Rusbult, et al., 1982; Sprecher, 1988). Both of these literatures are evidence that investment is an important construct in the research on relationships. This study was concerned with investment as a predictor of relationship satisfaction. In contrast with previous literature and consistent with

the topic of interest in this study, investment was compared to competing models in predicting relationship satisfaction.

As indicated earlier, the models of relationship investment and relationship equity have been examined both as predictors of relationship satisfaction and as components of larger models predicting relationship commitment. In a study by Sprecher (1988), investment and equity variables were studied with regard to their predictive abilities of relationship commitment. Satisfaction, inequity, and quality of alternatives were found to be significant predictors of relationship commitment. Investment was the only variable that was not shown to predict commitment.

In this study, the models of investment and equity were again compared, this time with the model of receiving desired loving behaviors included, as well. In contrast with the Sprecher study, in this investigation the models were compared with regard to the degree to which they account for the variance in relationship satisfaction, rather than variance in relationship commitment.

Hypothesis

This study tested the theories of receiving desired loving behaviors, equity, and investment. The predictive power of each theory with regard to relationship satisfaction was measured based on the degree to which participants reported receiving desired loving behaviors, experiencing equity, or making investments. It was hypothesized that the factor of receiving behaviors that lead to participants' experience of feeling loved would more powerfully predict relationship satisfaction than relationship equity or relationship

investment. In other words, the individuals who were most satisfied with their relationships would report a relatively small gap between loving behaviors they want and those they get, while also reporting the experience of feeling loved. This hypothesis was made based on the notion that feeling loved is a major component in relationship satisfaction and that receiving desired loving behaviors leads to feeling loved more than relationship equity or investment does.

Method

Participants

A total of 97 students participated in the study. The participants were never married students who were enrolled in an undergraduate psychology class at a large Southeastern university. The participants were compensated by receiving one extra credit point in the class for completing a questionnaire at the end of a class period.

Of the people reporting sex, 28 (35.00%) were men and 52 (65.00%) were women. Two responses were discarded from this statistic due to response error. The mean age of the participants was 19.25 years old ($SD = 1.56$). Of the people reporting education level, 39 (47.56%) completed less than one year of collegiate education, 9 (10.98%) completed one year of collegiate education, 13 (15.85%) completed two years, 10 (12.20%) completed three years, 10 (12.20%) completed four years, and 1 (1.22%) completed more than four years. Of the people reporting race, 60 (73.17%) were Whites (not Hispanic), 10 (12.20%) were Blacks (not Hispanic), 7 (8.54%) were Hispanics, 2 (2.43%) were Pacific

Islanders, 0 (0.00%) were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 3 (3.66%) reported Other.

Of the participants reporting marital status, 71 (88.75%) had never been married or cohabitated and 9 (11.25%) were cohabiting. Because the study was targeting unmarried romantic relationships, data from participants indicating that they were married, divorced, separated, or widowed were discarded from the study, but did receive credit for their participation. With regard to sexual preference, 74 (92.50%) were heterosexual, 1 (1.25%) were homosexual, and 5 (6.25%) were bisexual. Participants reporting relationship status included 45 (56.25%) currently in a relationship and 35 (43.75%) not currently in a relationship. Two responses were discarded from this statistic due to error in responding. Of those indicating they were not currently in a relationship, the mean length of time since the relationship had ended was 6.10 months ($SD = 8.09$). The mean duration of participants' current or most recent relationship was 14.06 months ($SD = 13.18$).

Procedure

Participants were informed during the day's class that there would be an extra credit opportunity at the end of class which will involve completing a questionnaire including nine demographic questions that will take about 20 to 25 minutes to finish. The demographic portion (see Appendix A) included items related to sex, age, education level, race, marital status, sexual preference, relationship status (i.e., currently involved or not), when the most recent relationship ended, and length of current or most recent relationship.

Participants were told that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous, and that they would receive one point in compensation for their participation to be added to their final grades. Each participant then turned in a separate piece of paper with his or her name on it so that he or she would receive credit. This paper was turned in with the questionnaire and answer sheet to ensure that the individual actually completed the questionnaire.

The participants completed a questionnaire consisting of items from: (1) The Provision of Desired Loving Behaviors Scale (Appendix B), (2) a measure of equity (Appendix C), and (3) an investment size measure (Appendix D). After completing this portion of the questionnaire, they were asked to answer questions regarding how much they feel loved by their partners (Appendix E) and completed a measure of relationship satisfaction (RAS; Appendix F). Following completion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked, debriefed, and dismissed.

Instruments

Measure of discrepancy in desired loving behaviors. The Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale is a 78-item paper-and-pencil measure based on Heesacker et al.'s (1998) Desired Loving Behaviors Scale (DLBS). The DLBS is a 39-item paper-and-pencil measure developed to assess behaviors individuals want to receive from their romantic partners in order to feel loved. Example items include "Leave a rose on my pillow," and "Create a feeling of security between us." The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale with values of never (0), rarely (1), sometimes (2), often (3), or always (4). In the present study,

the original DLBS items were listed twice (see Appendix B). The first time participants read the items they indicated how much they want to receive the loving behaviors from their partners. The second time, they were asked to indicate how much they get the same loving behaviors from their partners. From this, a discrepancy score was obtained by finding the absolute difference between the "want" score and the "get" score. This procedure was consistent with Samson's (1996) use of the DLBS to measure discrepancy.

The four factors of the DLBS include Relationship Support (10 items), Scripting (10 items), Sex (10 items), and Caring Actions (9 items). Each subscale is scored by calculating the mean. The Relationship Support subscale includes items 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19, 20, 23, and 30. The Scripting subscale includes items 1, 3, 15, 18, 25, 26, 27, 35, 36, and 38. The Sex subscale includes items 5, 7, 11, 14, 21, 22, 31, 32, 34, and 39. The Caring Actions subscale includes items 4, 6, 10, 17, 24, 28, 29, 33, and 37.

Test-retest reliability for a sample of 158 college students across a 26-day interval for the DLBS as a whole was $r = .65$. For the DLBS subscales, the test-retest reliabilities were as follows: Relationship Support, $r = .55$; Scripting, $r = .57$; Sex, $r = .59$; and Caring Actions, $r = .55$; all $ps < .01$.

Internal consistency reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha was for the DLBS as a whole was .91. For the DLBS subscales, the Cronbach's alphas were as follows: Relationship Support, alpha = .90; Scripting alpha = .90; Sex alpha = .91; and Caring Actions alpha = .78. These coefficients suggest an

adequate level of internal consistency reliability for the overall scale and for the four subscales.

To validate the DLBS, Heesacker et al. (1998) conducted a study to calculate the discrepancy between what people desired (using the DLBS) and what they actually received (using the DLBS items with modified instructions). The magnitude of the discrepancy was correlated with relationship satisfaction. As predicted, satisfaction decreased as the magnitude of the discrepancy increased. In another study, Heesacker et al. found that there were significantly higher discrepancy scores across all four subscales for failed relationships when compared with intact relationships. Additionally, as predicted, a cross-lag panel analysis found that overall discrepancy significantly predicted satisfaction 26 days later ($r = -.51, p < .01$). Satisfaction was also a significant predictor of discrepancy 26 days later ($r = -.38, p < .01$), and, as predicted, at a significantly smaller magnitude, $t(169) = 2.43, p \text{ (one-tailed)} < 0.01$. The patterns of correlations for the four subscales individually were similar to the above-described pattern of correlations.

Measure of equity/inequity. Two items were used to assess individual perceptions of fairness in their relationships (see Appendix C). The first item, the Hatfield Global Measure of Equity/Inequity (Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979) has been used widely in recent research (Canary & Stafford, 1992; Sprecher, 1986; 1988; Van Yperen & Buunk, 1990) and is considered an improvement on the Walster Global Measure of Equity/Inequity (1978). The second item was suggested by Sprecher (1986) because of suggestion that the Hatfield Global

Measure of Equity/Inequity seemed to assess only extreme cases of inequity. A second global equity measure was designed by Sprecher to supplement the Hatfield Global Measure in an effort to yield more response variation. Furthermore, Sprecher posits that the two measures probably assess "inequity for two different types of resources" (p. 312). The Hatfield measure would seem to "lead the respondents to think of stable assets that they bring to the relationship," such as physical attractiveness and social status. The Sprecher measure would assess an individual's thoughts and feelings about behaviors that are exchanged daily. In her study, Sprecher summed the items for a total index of inequity and found that the two measures correlated at .52 ($p < .001$) and the summed items have a Cronbach alpha of .64.

The two items are rated on a seven-point scale with the two endpoints representing relationship inequity (e.g., "My partner is getting a much better deal than I") and the midpoint suggesting relationship equity (e.g., "We are both getting an equally good [or bad] deal"). The items are scored by measuring the standard deviation from the mean (i.e., 0 to 3 points deviation) with higher scores indicating greater relationship inequity.

Measure of investment size. A 10-item measure of investment size (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998; see Appendix D) was used that was drawn from Rusbult's Investment Model Scale and based on the Investment Model of relationship commitment (1980, 1983). The Investment Model posits that commitment to maintain relationships is affected by three factors: relationship satisfaction, availability of alternatives, and resource investment of an intrinsic

versus extrinsic nature. The model has been widely used among researchers studying the construct of relationship investment (Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996; Davis & Strube, 1993; Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995).

To measure investment size, Rusbult's (1998) scale included two types of items. The five facet items measure concrete exemplars of the construct of investment size (e.g., invested time, shared identity, memories, self-disclosure, shared intellectual life). The five global items measure the construct in a general sense (e.g., "I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end"). The facet items were used in order to assist participants in responding to the global items by "activating thoughts about the construct and concretely illustrating" it (p. 364). Consequently, by increasing participants' understanding of the construct, the facet items increased the reliability and validity of the global items. Although both facet and global items should be administered, only global items should be used in formal analyses of Investment Model hypotheses.

In the three studies evaluating the reliability and validity of Investment Model variables (Rusbult et al., 1998), reliability for the global items of Investment Size was found to range from .82 to .84. Reliability for the facet items was found to range from .73 to .84, which Rusbult et al. noted to be acceptable despite expectations that the reliabilities of the facet items would be relatively lower than that of the global items due to the concrete nature of the items. Factor analyses of the Investment Model constructs (i.e., Commitment, Satisfaction, Alternatives, Investment) revealed, in all three studies, four factors with

eigenvalues exceeding 1.00, collectively accounting for 98% to 100% of the variance of the scale items. The factor loadings for Satisfaction, Alternatives, and Investment size indicated that all items loaded on a single factor with a coefficient greater than .40 and that no items exhibited cross-factor loadings greater than an absolute value of .40.

Generic measure of feeling loved. A five-item measure was constructed to assess participants' general sense of feeling loved by their partner in their current or most recent romantic relationship (see Appendix E). The instrument included Likert-type items rated on a scale of 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). Examples of items included in the measure are "I feel loved by my partner" and "I would characterize my relationship as a loving one." The instrument was designed to be a brief and simple measure of participants' assessment of feeling loved in order to correlate the results with those of the measures of desired loving behaviors, equity, investment, and satisfaction.

Measure of relationship satisfaction. The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988) is a brief measure of satisfaction in romantic relationships (see Appendix F). The RAS has been used in studies by Hendrick and other researchers as a generic measure of relationship satisfaction (e.g., Guldner & Swensen, 1995; Miller, 1997; Sacher & Fine, 1996). The instrument consists of seven Likert items and was based on a five-item Marital Assessment Questionnaire used in previous research (Hendrick, 1981). Scores on the instrument range from 1 (indicating low satisfaction) to 5 (indicating high satisfaction) and two items are reverse scored (items 4 and 7). Higher scores

indicate greater satisfaction. Changes in the original scale included the use of the word "partner" instead of "mate" and the word "relationship" instead of marriage. Two additional items were included from an earlier version of the scale. Examples of items from the RAS include: "In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?" and "How much do you love your partner?" The scale may be completed within a couple of minutes.

The RAS may be useful as a measure of relationship satisfaction because it is brief, general, and applicable to unmarried couples (Hendrick, 1988). In an initial study, moderate correlations among the items were found and item-total correlations varied from .57 to .76. The RAS was found to have a unifactorial scale structure, with the one factor accounting for 46% of the variance. The scale was found to be conceptually consistent with other relationship measures.

In Study 2, the mean inter-item correlation was found to be .49, an alpha of .86 was calculated, and a standardized alpha was found to be .87. Principle components factor analysis found one factor accounting for 57% of the variance in this study. The RAS had a correlation of .80 with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), a psychometrically sound, widely-used satisfaction instrument that assesses adjustment in married and cohabiting couples. The DAS is a 32-item measure and consists of four subscales: Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, Dyadic Consensus, and Affectional Expression. The RAS showed significant correlations for all but one of the items between partners in relationships in contrast with no significant correlations between randomly

selected partners. The RAS also discriminated couples who stayed together (predicting 91% of them) from those who broke up (predicting 86% of them).

Analyses

It was hypothesized that the factor of receiving behaviors that lead to participants' experience of feeling loved would more powerfully predict relationship satisfaction than relationship equity or relationship investment. Two simultaneous multiple regressions were performed to test the hypothesis. In both regressions, the predictor variables were: (a) the provision of desired loving behaviors, (b) relationship equity, and (c) relationship investment, and the criterion variable was relationship satisfaction, as measured by the RAS. The first regression tested the variance of satisfaction that was accounted for by the three models. The second regression included the effect of the mediating variable of the experience of feeling loved on satisfaction. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the magnitude of all the bivariate relationships. Cronbach's coefficient alphas were calculated to assess the internal consistency reliability of each measure.

Results

It was hypothesized that the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors, as mediated by the experience of feeling loved, would account for the greatest variance in relationship satisfaction when compared to relationship equity and relationship investment. This hypothesis was supported. Descriptive statistics from the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

<u>Variable</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Minimum Value</u>	<u>Maximum Value</u>	<u>n</u>
RAS	18.74	6.25	4.00	28.00	84
LOVE	14.13	5.70	0.00	20.00	84
DISCREPANCY	0.97	0.48	0.00	2.49	93
EQUITY	4.22	1.39	1.00	6.00	88
INVEST	19.19	9.37	0.00	40.00	85

Note. RAS = Relationship Assessment Scale; LOVE = Generic Measure of Feeling Loved; DISCREPANCY = Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale; EQUITY = Equity Measure; INVEST = Investment Measure.

Significance was found for the overall model in predicting relationship satisfaction, $F [3, 82] = 29.76$, $p < .01$, R -square = .53, Adj R -square = .51 (see Table 2). Although all three independent variables were significant predictors of relationship satisfaction, the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors was found to account for a larger variance in relationship satisfaction than either relationship equity or relationship investment, supporting the hypothesis.

When the factor of feeling loved was included in the regression analysis, it was found to account for the greatest variance of relationship satisfaction, $F [4, 82] = 44.62$, $p < .01$, R -square = .70, Adj R -square = .68. Results, shown in Table 3, were rendered nonsignificant for the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship investment, supporting the hypothesis that

Table 2

Summary of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Relationship Satisfaction

Variable	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	β
DISCREPANCY	-4.77	1.13	-.38****
EQUITY	1.18	0.37	.27**
INVEST	0.22	0.06	.33***

Note. DISCREPANCY = Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale;

EQUITY = Equity Measure; INVEST = Investment Measure.

$R^2 = .53$; Adjusted $R^2 = .51$ ($ps < .0001$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. **** $p < .0001$.

Table 3

Summary of Simultaneous Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Relationship Satisfaction with Feeling Loved as a Covariate

Variable	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	β
LOVE	0.70	0.11	.63****
DISCREPANCY	-1.54	1.04	-.12
EQUITY	0.93	0.30	.21**
INVEST	0.02	0.05	.03

Note. LOVE = Generic Measure of Feeling Loved; DISCREPANCY =

Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale; EQUITY = Equity Measure;

INVEST = Investment Measure.

$R^2 = .70$; Adjusted $R^2 = .68$ ($ps < .0001$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. **** $p < .0001$.

feeling loved does serve as a mediating factor between receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, this mediating effect was found between investment and satisfaction.

An ancillary simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to explore whether each of the three models was predictive of the hypothesized mediating factor of feeling loved (see Table 4). When feeling loved served as the criterion variable, investment accounted for the greatest variance, $F [3, 83] = 33.66$, $p < .01$, R -square = .56, Adj R -square = .54. The discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors was also significant ($p < .01$). Equity was not found to be a significant predictor of feeling loved ($p < .46$). These results indicate that the models of receiving desired loving behaviors and investment each make significant unique contributions to understanding the construct of feeling loved.

Table 4

Summary of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Love

Variable	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u>β</u>
DISCREPANCY	-4.31	1.01	-.37****
EQUITY	0.24	0.33	.06
INVEST	0.30	0.05	.50****

Note. DISCREPANCY = Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale;
EQUITY = Equity Measure; INVEST = Investment Measure.

$R^2 = .56$; Adjusted $R^2 = .54$ ($ps < .0001$).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. **** $p < .0001$.

Additional multiple regression analyses were conducted with sex as an additional predictor variable because of the difference in responding by men and women that was found in Study 2. In each of the analyses sex was included as a predictor variable and as an interaction term for each of the three models. Results from the three analyses demonstrated no main effect for sex or its interactions with each of the three models. The first multiple regression analysis included sex, the three models, and the interactions of sex and the three models as predictors of relationship satisfaction, $F [7, 81] = 16.53$, $p < .01$, $R\text{-square} = .61$, $\text{Adj } R\text{-square} = .57$. The second regression included sex, the three models, and the interactions of sex and the three models as predictors of love, $F [7, 81] = 16.89$, $p < .01$, $R\text{-square} = .62$, $\text{Adj } R\text{-square} = .58$. The third regression included sex, love, the three models, and the interactions of sex and the three models as predictors of relationship satisfaction, $F [8, 81] = 26.88$, $p < .01$, $R\text{-square} = .75$, $\text{Adj } R\text{-square} = .72$.

A series of bivariate correlations revealed that the discrepancy measure was significantly related to satisfaction ($r = -.54$) and love ($r = -.59$) in the expected directions (see Table 5). This supports the idea that, as the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors increases, levels of satisfaction and love decrease, and vice versa. The discrepancy measure correlated significantly and in the expected direction with equity ($r = -.38$) and investment ($r = -.38$), but with a weak magnitude. Equity and investment were not significantly correlated ($r = .14$). These results suggest that the models of discrepancy in desired loving behaviors, equity, and investment measure distinct things.

Table 5

Pearson Correlations Among Study 1 Measures

Measure	1	2	3	4	5
1. RAS	--	.80****	-.54****	.46****	.53****
2. LOVE	.80****	--	-.59****	.27*	.65****
3. DISCREPANCY	-.54****	-.59****	--	-.38***	-.38***
4. EQUITY	.46****	.27*	-.38***	--	.14
5. INVEST	.53****	.65****	-.38***	.14	--

Note. RAS = Relationship Assessment Scale; LOVE = Generic Measure of Feeling Loved; DISCREPANCY = Discrepancy in Desired Loving Behaviors Scale; EQUITY = Equity Measure; INVEST = Investment Measure.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. **** $p < .0001$.

Internal consistency reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and found to be as follows: DLBS alpha = .91, Measure of Equity/Inequity alpha = .43, Investment Size Measure alpha = .85, Generic Measure of Feeling Loved alpha = .94, and RAS alpha = .85. These findings suggest that all but the measure of equity displayed adequate internal consistency reliability for this sample of participants.

Discussion

Results from the analyses supported the hypothesis that the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors would more strongly predict relationship satisfaction than relationship equity or investment. Furthermore, there was

support for a mediating effect of the experience of feeling loved between the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction. An ancillary analysis found desired loving behaviors to significantly predict the experience of feeling loved. These results were found for both men and women, with no significant sex differences.

In comparing the desired loving behaviors model with relationship equity and relationship investment, all of the models were found to make unique contributions to the understanding of relationship satisfaction. However, only the models of loving behaviors and investment were found to be significant when feeling loved was included as a moderating variable. The ability of equity to predict satisfaction was not affected by removing the factor of love, suggesting that love is not a mediating factor between equity and satisfaction.

Data also suggested that, perhaps previously unrecognized by the theory's authors, the investment model appears to function by enhancing an individual's sense of feeling loved by the romantic partner. This, in turn, will influence the experience of relationship satisfaction. It may be that the desired loving behaviors model will influence satisfaction more directly by including the recognition of the importance of feeling loved into the basis of the model.

A major limitation of this study is the result of the instrument used to measure equity. The measure of equity was of limited reliability in this study ($r = .43$). Therefore, although it was found to significantly predict satisfaction, it is possible that a sounder measure of relationship equity would have produced

larger associations between it and relationship satisfaction and the experience of feeling love.

Another limitation of this study is that the test of the mediating effect of love does not rule out other possible factors that may have accounted for the effect. Although the data are consistent with the idea that love plays a mediating role, it is possible that there is some other factor that is similar to love that is yielding the significant results.

Conclusions

Predictions for this study were supported. Receiving desired loving behaviors from a romantic partner was found to predict relationship satisfaction and love, with love serving a mediating function between the two factors. Relationship investment was also found to predict relationship satisfaction when love served as the mediator. Relationship equity was found to be a significant predictor of satisfaction. However, results did not support the idea that love acted as the mediating variable between equity and satisfaction.

Results indicate that each of the three models is important in understanding satisfaction, but that the factor of love differs among them. Love is included in the basic premise of the desired loving behaviors model (i.e., if an individual is receiving behaviors that make him/her feel loved, satisfaction will be enhanced). Next, love is strongly correlated with investment in that increased investment will enhance love and in turn enhance satisfaction. Finally, love does not seem to be strongly connected with equity despite the significant contribution of equity to satisfaction. In other words, a relationship that is equitable is likely to

be a relationship that is satisfying, regardless of whether an individual feels loved as a result of the equity. Previous research findings have linked investment and equity with satisfaction. The findings of this study support the importance of including the desired loving behaviors model in research involving love and satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 2: CRITICAL INCIDENTS OF RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Introduction

Specific, identifiable incidents that occur within a romantic relationship may have a profound impact on an individual's sense of relationship satisfaction. Whether the incident is perceived as positive or negative, there is likely to be a resulting impact on relationship satisfaction. It seems unlikely that an individual would evaluate relationship satisfaction on an incident by incident basis. However, when asked to recall incidents that have significantly altered relationship satisfaction, individuals may be able to identify important themes or traits reflected in the incidents.

The study is an important part of this dissertation because it will help to provide an understanding of each participant's sense of what leads to relationship satisfaction by directly collecting qualitative data on the individual's experience within a relationship. The study was designed to examine relationship satisfaction by assessing the proportion of critical incidents reported in which issues regarding the provision of loving behaviors are linked to satisfaction changes. This was done by constructing a qualitative survey based on the Critical Incident Technique developed by Flanagan (1954). The survey was used to collect data that was sorted into categories to quantify the nature of incidents

that significantly influenced relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that the incidents described would influence perceived relationship satisfaction by either enhancing or detracting from the experience of feeling loved.

The Critical Incident Technique was chosen for use in the current study because no other instrument was uncovered that assesses a person's perceptions of the reasons that certain incidents significantly impact relationship satisfaction. This method has been successful as an exploratory technique (Woolsey, 1986) and will be used here to assess participants' perceptions regarding what leads to the experience of relationship satisfaction.

As outlined by Woolsey (1986), the five stages in a critical incident study are: (1) determining the aim of the activity, (2) setting the plans, specifications, and criteria, (3) collecting the data, (4) analyzing the data, and (5) reporting the findings (pp. 244-251). The aim of the activity was to explore incidents in which a partner in a romantic relationship did or said something that enhanced or diminished relationship satisfaction and that had a significant impact on the "observer" (i.e., the participant). For the second stage outlined by Woolsey, decisions involve which persons will be making the observations, who will be observed, and what behaviors will be observed. Unmarried male and female undergraduate students served as the observers because they were the population of interest for this research. Participants who indicated they were married on the demographic portion of the questionnaire were excluded from the study, but received credit for participation. The participants' "targets" were current or past partners in a romantic relationship who did or said something that

significantly impacted relationship satisfaction. In order to attempt to evoke more recent incidents, respondents were asked to think of an incident that had occurred in their current or most recent relationship that they could remember vividly. Keeping these parameters in mind, a critical incident questionnaire was developed (see Appendix G).

The data collection involved administering the questionnaire to members of an undergraduate psychology class. The minimum number of participants was 50 (25 female and 25 male), yielding at least 100 usable critical incidents (two to three critical incidents per participant). Analyzing these critical incident data involved sorting the incidents into categories, as recommended by Woolsey. Because the focus of the study was to examine the frequency with which the factor of Feeling Loved is linked with changes in relationship satisfaction of participants, this was one of the designated categories. As there are other competing models of factors involved with relationship satisfaction (see Study 1), other clusters of responses that emerged and represented those models were placed into separate categories. The other categories were Relationship Equity (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978), Relationship Investment (Rusbult, 1980; 1983), and Other.

Hypothesis

When asked to describe critical incidents related to relationship satisfaction, participants will link changes in relationship satisfaction to whether or not they felt loved by their partners.

Method

Participants

A total of forty-four students participated in the study. The participants were students who were enrolled in an undergraduate psychology class at a large Southeastern university. The participants were compensated by receiving one extra credit point in the class for completing a questionnaire at the end of a class period. Two of the forty-four participants received credit but were excluded from the study because they were married. One of the forty-four participants did not complete the demographic portion of the questionnaire but was included because her responses indicated that she was not married.

Of the participants reporting sex, 11 (26.83%) were men and 30 (73.17%) were women. The mean age of the participants was 20.71 years old ($SD = 1.94$). The mean age of the men was 20.73 years old ($SD = 1.42$). The mean age of the women was 20.70 ($SD = 2.12$). Of the participants reporting education level, 0 (0.0%) completed less than one year of collegiate education, 2 (4.88%) completed one year of collegiate education, 18 (43.90%) completed two years, 15 (36.59%) completed three years, 6 (14.63%) completed four years, and 0 (0.00%) completed more than four years. Of the participants reporting race, 29 (70.73%) were Whites (not Hispanic), 2 (4.88%) were Blacks (not Hispanic), 5 (12.20%) were Hispanics, 1 (2.44%) was Pacific Islander, 0 (0.00%) were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 4 (9.76%) reported Other.

Of the participants, 37 (90.24%) had never been married or cohabitated and 4 (9.76%) were cohabiting. Because the study was targeting unmarried

romantic relationships, participants indicating that they were married ($n = 2$) were discarded from the study, but received credit for their participation. Participants who were divorced, separated, or widowed ($n = 0$) would have also been discarded from the study. With regard to sexual preference, 41 (100.00%) were heterosexual, 0 (0.00%) were homosexual, and 0 (0.00%) were bisexual. Participants reporting relationship status included 25 (60.98%) currently in a relationship and 16 (39.02%) not currently in a relationship. Of the 16 participants indicating they were not currently in a relationship, 3 (18.75%) of the relationships had ended within the past month, 4 (25.00%) between more than one month and up to six months ago, 7 (43.75%) between more than six months up to one year ago, and 2 (12.50%) more than one year ago. The mean length of time since the relationship ended was 9.44 months ($SD = 6.94$). Of the 37 participants reporting the duration of their current or most recent relationship, 3 (8.11%) had lasted one month or less, 11 (29.73 %) had lasted more than one month and up to six months, 9 (24.32%) had lasted more than six months and up to one year, 11 (29.73%) had lasted more than one year and up to three years, and 3 (8.11%) had lasted more than three years. The mean length of the current or most recent relationship was 14.76 months ($SD = 14.42$).

Procedure

Participants were informed during the day's class that there would be an extra credit opportunity at the end of class which will involve completing a questionnaire including nine demographic questions that will take about 15 to 20 minutes to finish. The demographic portion (see Appendix A) included items

related to sex, age, education level, race, marital status, sexual preference, relationship status (i.e., currently involved or not), when the most recent relationship ended, and length of current or most recent relationship.

Participants were told that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous, and that they would receive one point in compensation for their participation to be added to their final grades. Each participant then turned in a separate piece of paper with his or her name on it so that he or she would receive credit. This paper was turned in with the questionnaire and answer sheet to ensure that the individual actually completed the questionnaire.

The participants completed a Relationship Satisfaction Critical Incident Questionnaire (see Appendix G). The questionnaire asked them to think of times when their partners said or did something that importantly influenced their relationship satisfaction, in either a positive or negative manner, and explain why. At the conclusion of the study, the participants were thanked, debriefed, and dismissed.

Measure of Incidents Affecting Relationship Satisfaction

A Relationship Satisfaction Critical Incidents Questionnaire was developed by the author as a survey instrument. The results of the survey were categorized and summarized using the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954; Woolsey, 1986). The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the reasons that particular incidents significantly impacted relationship satisfaction in order to see whether participants identify changes in feeling loved as occurring when relationship satisfaction changes. They were asked to list these things after

reading one example of an incident that led to an enhanced sense of relationship satisfaction and one example of an incident that led to a diminished sense of relationship satisfaction. In order to obtain both positive and negative incidents, the participants were asked to describe a positive incident if they had already described negative incidents, and to describe a negative incident if they had already described positive incidents. Additionally, participants were asked to identify when the incident took place.

Developed by John Flanagan (1954) in order to determine effective pilot performance during World War II, the critical incident technique is "an exploratory qualitative method of research that has been shown both reliable and valid in generating a comprehensive and detailed description of content domain" (Woolsey, 1986, p. 242).

Although the focus of this study is on the experience of feeling loved, there are competing models of relationship satisfaction (i.e., equity, investment) that may have been identified when participants described incidents that significantly impacted relationship satisfaction. Therefore, the data that were collected and sorted were used to calculate the proportion of critical incidents described by participants that fell into the categories of: (1) feeling loved, (2) relationship equity, (3) investment in the relationship, and (4) other. Two judges who were graduate students, blind to the hypotheses of the study, and independent of one another were trained to sort the responses into the clusters.

Training Method

The two judges and the investigator met as a group to discuss the procedure. First, the judges read the directions that were given to the participants. They were then explained the categories of Feeling Loved, Relationship Equity, Relationship Investment, and Other. The basic explanations of the categories (which were explained in more detail to the judges) were as follows. The category of Feeling Loved was explained as including any response that indicated that the individual experienced a sense of receiving love from his/her partner. Judges were asked to refrain from using subjective ideas of whether the incident would make them feel loved in using this category. Instead, they were told to rely on the explanations written by the participants. For example, the judges were informed that an explanation stating that a participant felt jealous or as if he/she could not trust the partner should not be considered as a Feeling Loved response unless the participant specifically stated that the incident affected his/her sense of feeling loved.

The category of Relationship Equity was explained as including any incident in which the participant discussed issues related to fairness and whether one partner was benefiting from the relationship to a greater degree. The category of Relationship Investment was explained as including any incidents in which the participant discussed issues related to resources put into a relationship by either partner that would be lost if the relationship were to end (e.g., time shared, mutual friends, common interests). The category of Other was explained

as including any incidents that could not be identified as fitting clearly into any of the previous three categories.

After explaining the categories, the judges were asked to give examples of what would fall into each of the categories to ensure that they understood them. Next, examples from participants' responses were read to the judges and a group discussion (including the investigator) took place in which a consensus was reached as to which category the response would fall into. Although there were some differing opinions, the judges' and investigator's reasoning was discussed in those cases and consensus was consequently reached.

The judges then read and categorized five responses on their own. A discussion ensued in which there were some differences, which were resolved by clarifying the underlying ideas of each of the constructs (i.e., feeling loved, relationship equity, relationship investment) and by focusing on what the participant identified as being the direct cause of a change in satisfaction level. Because there was some lack of consensus, the responses of two more participants were read and consensus was clearly reached on those. The judges reported feeling comfortable and familiar with the task and proceeded to categorize the remaining responses individually and without discussion. The investigator also participated in the categorization task, so that each response had three ratings.

Analyses

Data were collected from the two judges and the investigator to yield proportions of incidents that fell into each of the four categories. The inter-rater

agreement was found to be low when including the two judges and the investigator. Because the ratings of the incidents by one of the judges (Judge 1) significantly deviated from the other two, those ratings were discarded. Next, the two with the higher agreement (i.e., Judge 2 and the investigator) discussed the incidents and came to a consensus for the items on which they had made different judgments. The process, including the training and independent ratings, lasted approximately three hours.

Results

As previously noted, inter-rater agreement was low when including the two judges and the investigator (43.75%). When ratings were examined in pairs, Judge 1 had lower agreement with both Judge 2 and the investigator than Judge 2 and the investigator had with one another. Agreement between Judge 1 and Judge 2 was 60.42%, and agreement between Judge 1 and the investigator was 56.25%. These two levels of agreement were much lower than that between Judge 2 and the investigator, which was 75.82%. This discrepancy was resolved by discarding Judge 1's data and using a consensus among Judge 2 and the investigator to categorize the items on which they had differed. In the discussion that resolved these discrepancies, Judge 2 and the investigator categorized as Other those items that could not be categorized as being "mostly" Feeling Loved, Relationship Equity, or Relationship Investment. Examples of participants' responses that fell into each of the four categories, including the incident that affected satisfaction and the reason why it was affected, are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Examples of Critical Incidents

Feeling Loved:

INC: A little over a month ago I was really stressed from school and family life, and I hadn't been able to spend any time with the guy I was seeing for a week (which was really hard on me). After one of my major tests was over, he picked me up and took me over to his place where he'd rented my favorite movie and had candles lit all over the place. He told me that all he wanted to do was to be close to me all night and how much he'd missed me.

WHY: Because I knew that he really cared for me. Plus, I'd never seen his romantic side before.

INC: I surprised my boyfriend by coming into town a night early (he lives an hour away from me) and I got a hold of his friends to find out where he'd be at. When I unexpectedly showed up at a party he was at, he was so happy and he told me I was beautiful.

WHY: It makes me feel special, and loved.

Relationship Equity:

INC: My girlfriend got mad at me when I told her I was possibly going home to visit a friend for one night.

WHY: This INC made me angry because I trust her to go out and do things with her friends but she didn't want me to go see a good friend of mine because this friend is a girl.

Table 6--continued

INC: My boyfriend and two friends of ours were driving home after the club one night. My boyfriend was shot by another guy in my car. He stayed with me for the next five months and I took care of him. He didn't have any money, so I paid for everything. I had to do this all while still going to school. I never once received appreciation or a simple "thank you"!

WHY: I realized that no matter how much I gave I would never be appreciated. I didn't want anything back, just a "thank you" would have been nice. He is the type of person who will take, but never consider giving back one in a while.

Relationship Investment:

INC: My boyfriend, who had been a long-time friend and who I have only recently become romantically involved with (we were actually each other's "first love" eight years ago) again does not live in Gainesville. Since our relationship has become romantic, he has decided to move here and go back to school.

WHY: This made me feel more satisfied because it indicated to me that he is truly committed, and willing to work hard to improve his own life and our relationship.

INC: My boyfriend received a job offer in California, and he said he would help me pay for grad school, a car, and I would live with him if I came out there after I graduated.

Table 6--continued

WHY: It enhanced it because it showed that he was really committed to me seriously.

Other:

INC: I brought my last boyfriend home to meet my parents at the beginning of the winter break. While at home, I left to run some errands one day and my boyfriend and my mother stayed home and played a game of Scrabble. This was the first time the two were alone together and he cheated in the game and passed it off like he was winning. My mother never said anything to him, so to this day he thinks he got away with it.

WHY: I learned that I couldn't trust him and it was one of the reasons I broke up with him.

INC: My boyfriend and I had broken up and decided to see other people for a while. We ended up getting back together (for some unknown reason) and he found out who every guy was that I had dated during our breakup and threatened them that if they ever talked to me again, they'd regret it.

WHY: I didn't find this out until right before we broke up for good the second time, but it made me realize what a hostile and unstable person he is.

Note. INC refers to the response given to the query: Describe the incident that affected your relationship satisfaction; WHY refers to the response given to the query: Why did it affect your level of relationship satisfaction?

Of the ninety-one incidents rated by the judges, 43 (47.25%) were categorized as Feeling Loved, 24 (26.37%) as Other, 22 (24.18%) as Relationship Investment, and 2 (2.20%) as Relationship Equity. Chi-square analysis revealed that the pattern of responses for the four categories was significantly different than what would be expected by chance, $\chi^2(3, N = 91) = 37.04$, $p < .01$, and was significantly different for men and women, $\chi^2(7, N = 91) = 42.63$, $p < .01$. Women were found to associate relationship satisfaction with Feeling Loved more than men (see Table 7).

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage of Critical Incidents Categorized by Sex

Variable	Men ($n = 21$)		Women ($n = 70$)		Total ($N = 91$)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
LOVE	6	28.57%	37	52.86%	43	47.25%
EQUITY	1	4.76%	1	1.43%	2	2.20%
INVEST	6	28.57%	16	22.86%	22	24.18%
OTHER	8	38.10%	16	22.86%	24	26.37%

Note. LOVE = Feeling Loved; EQUITY = Equity; INVEST = Investment; OTHER = Other.

Discussion

The results support the hypothesis that participants will associate relationship satisfaction with the experience of feeling loved. Furthermore, participants associated relationship satisfaction with Feeling Loved more often

than they associated it with Relationship Equity, Relationship Investment, or some other construct. Participants most often linked changes in levels of relationship satisfaction with a change in the degree to which they felt loved by their partners.

Although there was a significant sex difference in the results as revealed by chi-square analysis, neither men nor women identified issues related to relationship equity as important in incidents that clearly changed relationship satisfaction. This suggests that individuals did not link the perceived degree of fairness in their relationships with satisfaction. Women identified feeling loved as being associated with relationship satisfaction more than twice as often as they identified relationship investment or other sources, suggesting that incidents affecting the experience of feeling loved by the partner were much more likely to be associated with changes in satisfaction than incidents related to investment size or some other construct. Men, in contrast, most often gave responses in the category of responses that either did not clearly fit into any of the three categories or that clearly identified another construct (e.g., jealousy, trust). They identified incidents affecting their sense of feeling loved and or perceptions of investment size as being linked to changes in relationship satisfaction with the same frequency. Although the sample size of men's responses was small ($n = 21$), it was sufficient for conducting the chi-square analysis.

There are several limitations to this study. First, the sample size was smaller than desired, with more females than males represented. Second, the nature of the scoring was subjective in that judges were asked to disregard both

their personal feelings related to their relationship histories and their personal reactions to the incidents in order to categorize the responses in as objective a manner as possible. Third, and related to the issue of personal bias, both of the judges, as well as the investigator, were women, which may have introduced a sex bias in the ratings.

Finally, there was a problem with the inter-rater agreement being low. This could have been an indicator that there was a flaw in the training method. However, in resolving the discrepancies between Judge 2 and the investigator, it was found that there was indeed a clear understanding of the categories on the part of the judge. The discussion strengthened the likelihood of an alternative to there being a training flaw. The alternative idea is that the low agreement occurred for two reasons: (a) the categories may overlap to a certain degree; and (b) there are several other constructs that individuals associate with relationship satisfaction other than feeling loved, equity, and investment.

Conclusions

This study supported the hypothesis that individuals associate relationship satisfaction with feeling loved by their partner more often than they associate it with relationship equity or relationship investment. A difference was found in the frequency with which men and women linked changes in relationship satisfaction with a variety of constructs. However, although the results were more strongly supported by women as a group than men, the study still suggests that the experience of feeling loved is a powerful one that deserves further study and recognition with regard to relationship satisfaction. Previous literature has

focused on links between relationship satisfaction and the constructs of relationship equity and relationship investment. This study demonstrated that feeling loved has a significant link with participants' perceptions regarding important changes in their relationship satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 3: FREE RESPONSE

Introduction

Individuals perceive different experiences as instilling a feeling of being loved by a romantic partner. These different experiences may vary in their importance for an individual to feel loved. It was hypothesized that individuals who are receiving behaviors from their romantic partners that they view as important for them to feel loved will be satisfied in their relationships.

Hendrick and Hendrick (1997) defined relationship satisfaction as a summative judgment about an intimate relationship. Further, they acknowledged that although issues about satisfaction are important and may determine whether partners stay together or break up, relationship satisfaction is a much-debated topic with a variety of definitions. The authors asserted that one of the major predictors of relationship satisfaction is love, which they contended plays a critical role in people's lives. Love, however, is not the only predictor of relationship satisfaction. Their discussion of love included various perspectives of love and how it leads to relationship satisfaction, focusing on the six "love styles" (Lee, 1973) that they hypothesize vary in their ability to predict relationship satisfaction.

Prior to this study, data that have been collected (e.g., Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994; Heesacker et al, 1998) have focused on measuring relationship satisfaction based on whether individuals were or were not receiving desired loving behaviors. Samson (1996), using the DLBS (Heesacker & Lawrence, 1994), examined how relationship satisfaction is affected by the difference between what individuals desire from their partners to feel loved and what they actually receive from their partners. Although DLBS scores and relationship satisfaction had been shown to be linked, a causal relationship between receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction had not yet been explored.

Samson (1996) attempted to uncover whether the four factors measured by the DLBS were causally connected to relationship satisfaction. The two hypotheses included: (1) that the discrepancy between what individuals want and what they get in order to feel loved will be linked to relationship satisfaction, such that a greater discrepancy would be associated with lower satisfaction (as shown in previous correlational studies), and (2) that an intervention to reduce the discrepancy between what individuals want and what they get in order to feel loved would be associated with increased relationship satisfaction. Results supported the hypothesis that the discrepancy between desired and received loving behaviors was significantly and inversely related to relationship satisfaction. However, results suggested that the experimental manipulation of the amount of discrepancy was not effective, thus rendering inappropriate any attempts to evaluate her second hypothesis.

The Samson (1996) study forms the basis for the present study, with the premise that a match between expectations and outcomes, or desired and received behaviors, is associated with happier, more satisfying relationships. There are other studies that examine this premise of discrepancy or mismatch in the realm of marriage and other romantic relationships with regard to relationship satisfaction (e.g., Chadwick, Albrecht, & Kunz, 1976; Tucker & O'Grady, 1991). A smaller discrepancy between desired and received loving behaviors has been associated with happier and more enduring relationships in research conducted before Samson's study (e.g., Heesacker et al., 1998).

This dissertation also focuses on the discrepancy between what individuals want versus what they receive with regard to loving behaviors and how this discrepancy is associated with relationship satisfaction. However, this third in the series of studies is distinct from previous studies because data were collected regarding the perceived importance of the loving behaviors received. By rating the importance of behaviors that are linked to an individual feeling loved, it is hypothesized that predictions of relationship satisfaction will be strengthened.

In this study, several variables were assessed. First, participants listed what they wanted from their partners to feel loved. They rated the importance of each of these behaviors in instilling in them a feeling of being loved. Next, they indicated how much they were receiving these behaviors from their partners in their current or most recent relationships. Finally, they indicated their levels of satisfaction with their relationships.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that participants who receive desired loving behaviors that are important to them would be the most satisfied with their relationships. In other words, it was predicted that if the discrepancy between what an individual wants and what he/she gets is small and the behaviors that are desired are deemed important by an individual in order to feel loved, then relationship satisfaction would be highest. In contrast, if the discrepancy between what an individual wants and what he/she gets is large and the behaviors that are desired are deemed important by an individual in order to feel loved, then relationship satisfaction would suffer. Relationship satisfaction would also be reported to be lower when only behaviors unimportant for feeling loved are provided. This was predicted to occur because feeling loved is thought to be a mediating factor between receiving loving behaviors and satisfaction. Consequently, behaviors deemed important to feeling loved would have a greater impact on the resulting experience of satisfaction in a relationship.

Method

Participants

A total of 92 students participated in the study. The participants were students who were enrolled in an undergraduate psychology class at a large Southeastern university. The participants were compensated by receiving one extra credit point in the class for completing a questionnaire at the end of a class period.

Of the people reporting sex, 20 (21.98%) were men and 71 (78.02%) were women. The mean age of the participants was 21.14 years old ($SD = 3.10$). Of the people reporting education level, 0 (0.00%) completed less than one year of collegiate education, 10 (10.87%) completed one year of collegiate education, 23 (25.00%) completed two years, 31 (33.70%) completed three years, 22 (23.91%) completed four years, and 6 (6.52%) completed more than four years. Of the people reporting race, 66 (71.74%) were Whites (not Hispanic), 10 (10.87%) were Blacks (not Hispanic), 9 (9.78%) were Hispanics, 3 (3.26%) were Pacific Islanders, 0 (0.00%) were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 4 (4.34%) reported Other.

Of the participants reporting marital status, 83 (90.22%) had never been married or cohabitated and 9 (9.78%) were cohabiting. Because the study was targeting unmarried romantic relationships, data from participants indicating that they were married, divorced, separated, or widowed were discarded from the study, but these participants did receive credit for their participation. Regarding sexual orientation, 85 (92.39%) were heterosexual, 3 (3.26%) were homosexual, and 4 (4.34%) were bisexual. Participants reporting relationship status included 66 (71.74%) currently in a relationship and 26 (28.26%) not currently in a relationship. Of those indicating they were not currently in a relationship, the mean of the length of time since the relationship had ended was 13.67 months ($SD = 15.65$). The mean of the duration of participants' current or most recent relationship was 19.52 months ($SD = 20.64$).

Procedure

Participants were informed during the day's class that there would be an extra credit opportunity at the end of class which would involve completing a questionnaire (including nine demographic questions) that would take about 20 to 25 minutes to finish. The demographic portion (see Appendix A) included items related to sex, age, education level, race, marital status, sexual preference, relationship status (i.e., currently involved or not), when the most recent relationship ended, and length of current or most recent relationship.

Participants were told that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous, and that they would receive one point in compensation for their participation to be added to their final grades. Each participant then turned in a separate piece of paper with his or her name on it so that he or she would receive credit. This paper was turned in with the questionnaire and answer sheet to ensure that the individual actually completed the questionnaire.

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire including the demographic questions (see Appendix A), a free response questionnaire (see Appendix H), and the measure of relationship satisfaction (see Appendix F; discussed in Study 1). On the free response questionnaire they first listed what they wanted from their partners in order to feel loved. Next, they rated how important each behavior was for them to feel loved. They then were asked to rate how much they were getting these things from their partner. Finally, they completed the relationship satisfaction measure. Following completion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked, debriefed, and dismissed.

Measure of Desired Behaviors Deemed Important in Feeling Loved

A free response questionnaire was designed by the investigator to assess what the participants wanted from their partners in order to feel loved (see Appendix H). After listing these things, participants assessed each item they listed on two dimensions. First, they rated on a scale of 0 (not at all important) to 4 (very important) how important each thing was in making them feel loved. Then, they rated on a scale of 0 (never) to 4 (far too much) how much they were receiving each thing from their partners.

Analyses

Two methods of analysis were conducted because participants listed differing numbers of desired loving behaviors. In the first analysis, only the participants who gave answers for all of the ten spaces made available for responses were included ($n = 53$) and a multiple regression analysis was performed. The predictor variables were the interaction of (a) the importance of the listed loving behaviors and (b) the degree to which participants receive desired loving behaviors from their partners for each of the ten items. The criterion variable was relationship satisfaction, as measured by the RAS.

In the second analysis, a sum of the scores of the interaction of the ratings of the desired loving behaviors as (a) important and (b) received from the partner was calculated for each participant in the sample ($n = 88$). For example if a participant gave responses for all ten of the spaces made available, then the sum of all ten interaction terms was calculated. If a participant gave responses for only three of the ten spaces made available, the sum of those three

interaction terms was calculated. For each of the total participants, the sum was calculated rather than the mean to allow the less important behaviors to contribute to the model without detracting from the overall meaning of it. The sum scores were correlated with relationship satisfaction. Examples of the desired behaviors listed by participants are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Examples of Free Responses from Study 3 Participants

What do you want your partner to DO to make you feel loved?

Show interest in my life and the things that are important to me.

Listen to what I have to say.

Be honest and loyal.

Spend time with me.

Introduce me to family/friends.

Give me hugs/kisses.

Have sex with me.

Buy little gifts for me.

What do you want your partner to SAY to make you feel loved?

I love you.

You are important to me.

I want to marry you.

I am proud of you.

I miss you when we're apart.

I enjoy being with you.

Table 8—continued

You are beautiful.

I respect you.

I'm here for you.

How was your day?

Results

It was hypothesized that receiving a preferred level of behaviors that were deemed as important to feeling loved would be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported in both analyses. Results from the multiple regression analysis, shown in Table 9, were significant for the interaction term predicting relationship satisfaction, $F [10, 53] = 3.58, p < .01$, R -square = .45, Adj R -square = .33. In the correlational analysis, the interaction term was found to be significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction ($r = .88, r = .36, p < .01$).

Two additional simultaneous multiple regression analyses were conducted in which discrepancy was entered as a covariate to test whether the factor of importance as part of the interaction between importance and discrepancy made a contribution over and above that of discrepancy alone. One analysis was conducted using only the responses of participants who gave answers for all of the ten spaces made available, $F [11, 53] = 3.19, p < .01$, R -square = .46, Adj R -square = .31. The other analysis was conducted using the five responses given by all participants in the sample, $F [6, 82] = 4.62, p < .01$, R -square = .27, Adj R -

Table 9

Summary of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for the Discrepancy in Receiving Important Desired Loving Behaviors Predicting Relationship Satisfaction

Variable	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	β
ITEM A	0.64	0.38	.27
ITEM B	0.12	0.31	.05
ITEM C	0.38	0.36	.14
ITEM D	-0.24	0.34	-.10
ITEM E	-0.21	0.33	-.09
ITEM F	0.70	0.36	.27
ITEM G	-0.05	0.44	-.02
ITEM H	-0.44	0.38	-.18
ITEM I	0.70	0.39	.29
ITEM J	0.54	0.38	.22

Note. ITEM A through ITEM J represent the discrepancy scores for the participants who gave responses for all ten response spaces ($n = 53$).

$R^2 = .45$; Adjusted $R^2 = .33$ ($ps < .01$).

square = .21. Results suggested that discrepancy was not a significant predictor of satisfaction. In other words, when only the discrepancy in receiving behaviors was considered without including the importance of receiving those behaviors, relationship satisfaction could not be significantly predicted.

Additional multiple regression analyses were conducted with sex as an additional predictor variable because of the difference in responding by men and

women that was found in Study 2. Results from these two analyses demonstrated no significant interactions with sex. One analysis was conducted using only the responses of participants who gave answers for all of the ten spaces made available, $F [10, 53] = 0.20$, $p > 1.00$, R -square = .04, Adj R -square = -.18. The other analysis was conducted using the five responses given by all participants in the sample, $F [5, 81] = 0.04$, $p > 1.00$, R -square = .00, Adj R -square = -.06.

Discussion

Previous research has demonstrated that the discrepancy between what individuals want from their partners and what they actually receive is predictive of and correlated with relationship satisfaction (Heesacker et al., 1998; Samson, 1996). Results from this study add to this line of research by supporting the hypothesis that when individuals receive loving behaviors that are important to them at a desired level (i.e., not too much or too little), they will report higher relationship satisfaction than if the behaviors are not received at the desired level and/or they are less important to feeling loved. Furthermore, when the factor of importance was included, the interaction between it and the discrepancy value was shown to increase the predictive ability of the model which previously included only the discrepancy value to predict satisfaction. These results were found to be applicable for both men and women, with no significant sex differences.

These results indicate that there is another factor that makes a unique contribution to the understanding of relationship satisfaction. This factor is the

importance of a behavior in feeling loved. In other words, although many behaviors may be deemed to be demonstrative of love, they are not of equal importance in instilling the feeling of being loved by a partner. Thus, behaviors should be considered in terms of their weighted importance to an individual's sense of feeling loved. The fact that the effect was found both when all participants were included, but not all items, as well as when all items were included, but not all participants, suggests that the results are not an artifact of either items or participants being omitted from analysis.

Conclusions

This study provided further support for the relationship between receiving desired loving behaviors and satisfaction. It also included a new factor to predict relationship satisfaction, namely the degree of importance a behavior has to a person's experience of feeling loved. Finally, this study has implications for future research involving relationship satisfaction in that it further supports and refines the notion that attempts at reducing the discrepancy between what individuals want and what they receive from their partners may serve to increase satisfaction levels.

CHAPTER 6 GENERAL DISCUSSION

Summary

This dissertation was designed to study to what extent three factors; receiving desired loving behaviors, feeling loved, and relationship satisfaction; are related to one another. Another purpose of the dissertation was to compare the proposed model of feeling loved as a source of relationship satisfaction with models of equity and investment. Data were collected from undergraduate students in three separate studies in order to assess various aspects of the topic.

Study 1 examined whether the provision of desired loving behaviors accounted for a greater proportion of relationship satisfaction than the competing models of relationship equity and relationship investment. The study also examined to what extent the experience of feeling loved served as a mediating factor in the relationship between the three relationship model components of desired loving behaviors, equity, and investment, and relationship satisfaction. Study 2 assessed critical incidents affecting relationship satisfaction and whether changes in participants' experience of feeling loved were a common theme identified when participants described changes in relationship satisfaction. Study 3 included a free response questionnaire to assess whether individuals who

reported receiving optimal levels of behaviors that they deemed as important to feeling loved would be more satisfied with their relationships than individuals who were not.

Results and Interpretations of Hypothesis Testing

Study 1's hypothesis posited that receiving behaviors that participants desired in order to feel loved will more powerfully predict relationship satisfaction than equity or investment behaviors, and it was supported. Results suggested that receiving desired loving behaviors predicted satisfaction as well as or better than the models of equity and investment. Additionally, as predicted, the factor of feeling loved was demonstrated to play a mediating role between receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, the investment model also significantly predicted satisfaction, with the surprise finding that feeling loved apparently plays a mediating role in this model, as well. Equity was the weakest of the models, with the least predictive ability. Parenthetically, feeling loved failed to play a mediational role between equity and satisfaction. Taken together these findings suggest that the most powerful predictions of relationship satisfaction involve behaviors related to feeling loved, a finding consistent with the position of Hendrick and Hendrick (1997).

These results provide support for the notion that receiving desired loving behaviors leads to feeling loved which, in turn, leads to relationship satisfaction. It appears that relationship investment is also a significant model to consider when investigating the topics of love and satisfaction.

Study 2's hypothesis posited that when participants were asked to describe critical incidents related to relationship satisfaction, they would link changes in relationship satisfaction to whether or not they felt loved by their partners. This hypothesis was supported. Participants reported associations of feeling loved with relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, feeling loved was linked with relationship satisfaction more often than relationship equity or relationship investment. When responses were examined by sex, however, the support for the hypothesis remained for women but not for men. Men tended to mostly identify themes unrelated to feeling loved, relationship equity, or relationship investment. Overall, the model of equity was rarely mentioned as being linked with satisfaction.

These results suggest that individuals link the experience of feeling loved with relationship satisfaction, but that there are other themes that are often linked to changes in satisfaction. Issues of investment were identified, along with other themes that were not specifically measured (e.g., jealousy, trust). A greater variety of themes was identified by the participants, particularly by the men, that may be part of a more complex understanding of the nature of relationship satisfaction.

Finally, a sex difference in responding was found, which may be suggestive of a different attributional style or of differing experiences of relationship satisfaction between men and women. In other words, when men were asked to write about incidents when relationship satisfaction was affected, it seems that men were not inclined to use the experience of feeling loved as an

explanatory model or that they used a wider range of explanations (e.g., jealousy, trust). Results from sex analyses in Study 1 and Study 3 did not support differences in responding between men and women, which may be due to the nature of the questionnaires in those studies (i.e., men could more easily endorse items related to love with objective, Likert-type items than produce an explanatory model that cited love as being linked with satisfaction).

Study 3's hypothesis predicted that participants who were receiving behaviors that they deemed as important to feeling loved would be more satisfied with their relationships than participants who were not. This hypothesis was supported. Results suggested that individuals who report a small discrepancy between wanting and receiving loving behaviors that are important to them in order to feel loved will report greater relationship satisfaction. This study also supported the notion that including a rating of the importance of the behavior to feeling loved would improve the ability to predict relationship satisfaction.

A possible discrepancy among the studies arose when an aggregate of the results was obtained. In Study 1, results suggested that investment was a significant predictor of love. However, in Study 2, participants' responses were rated using investment and love as separate categories, which would seem inconsistent with the Study 1 results. This discrepancy may be explained by considering the nature of the questionnaires and analyses. Study 1 utilized a Likert-type item questionnaire, with participants rating their investment and experience of feeling loved in their relationships. Study 2 utilized a system in

which two judges and the investigator categorized the responses according to a clear understanding of the two constructs as being distinct. The category of investment was understood as the amount of resources shared put into a relationship by either partner that would be lost if the relationship were to end (e.g., time shared, mutual friends, common interests). The category of feeling loved was understood as the subjective report of receiving love from his/her partner. One possible explanation is based on the correlational data which suggest that the driver of relationship investment could be the experience of feeling loved. Thus, the incidents as related by the participants were reported either at the general level of feeling loved or at the more specific level of relationship investment.

Bierhoff (1991) and Hendrick and Hendrick (1997) posited a relationship between love and satisfaction. Similarly, in all three studies in this dissertation, participants linked love with satisfaction. In the Heesacker et al. (1998) and Samson (1996) studies, the model of receiving desired loving behaviors was found to predict satisfaction, similar to the findings of Study 1 and Study 3 of this dissertation. These three studies contribute to the empirical research by focusing on love as the mediating effect between desired loving behaviors and by demonstrating that this as a sound model when compared with the widely researched models of equity and investment.

Limitations and Recommendations

This dissertation was comprised of three separate studies that focused on different aspects of the same topic. The primary reason for conducting three

studies was to overcome the limitations inherent in each of the individual studies by aggregating the findings from studies with offsetting limitations. Because of this, there were just three major limitations shared by all of the studies within the dissertation. The first of these limitations is that all three studies involved self-report, paper-and-pencil assessment of the constructs of interest. This introduces a monomethod bias and limits construct validity. By using only this type of assessment, there is no definitive evidence that the findings of the studies will generalize to real-world explanations of behavior. Operationalizing constructs by the reports of collaterals, such as the participants' romantic partners, and by behavioral observation, for example observing couples while they interact for evidence of their satisfaction with the relationship, would provide an important source of confidence regarding the construct validity of key constructs under investigation.

The second limitation was that the design of all three studies was correlational. Because of this, statements of causality could not be offered. Future research should include experimental manipulation of the variables to assess whether desired loving behaviors, investment, and equity lead to love and satisfaction.

The third limitation was the inclusion of participants who were all unmarried, mostly White and heterosexual, college students, thus raising concerns regarding the generalizability of the results. These findings may not generalize to people of color, to individuals in the same age group who are not college students, to older individuals, or to people who have experienced more

and longer romantic relationships, marriage, divorce, separation, or the loss of a spouse.

Future research should include participants of more diverse backgrounds. In doing so, the premise of this dissertation may be tested to see whether it generalizes to other groups. First, a limited number of participants was from another culture. By focusing on other cultures, questions may be answered such as: How is the construct of love understood if the behavioral expression of love is not culturally acceptable? How is relationship satisfaction understood? How do individuals show their love for one another, if they do so at all? Next, with regard to homosexual and bisexual individuals, further investigation into their preferences for love and experiences of relationship satisfaction would assist in determining whether the results of these studies apply to these individuals as well.

Future research should focus on love and relationship satisfaction among married, divorced, separated, or widowed individuals to determine whether the results generalize to these groups as well. Perhaps the constructs are understood differently by them, particularly if an individual is using a framework of a stable and committed long-term relationship which may involve children. It is possible that the idea of the discrepancy in receiving desired loving behaviors as predicting relationship satisfaction would apply, but with the specified desired loving behaviors differing. In that case, another DLBS instrument should be constructed to apply to individuals presently or formerly in a marital relationship.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

Results from the studies suggest that future research consider several constructs as being related to or predictive of relationship satisfaction. The model of receiving desired loving behaviors and thus feeling loved was demonstrated to be a valid one with respect to the conceptualization of satisfaction. Furthermore, equity and investment have been shown in this and in previous empirical studies to be related to satisfaction, although in this dissertation, investment was shown to be a more powerful model than equity. Data gained from the vignettes in Study 2 suggested that there are other constructs as well that could be considered in future empirical studies focused on relationship satisfaction, such as jealousy, trust, and the personality features of the partner.

Future research should also focus on behaviors that are received that are not indicative of love. This is a component that may be overlooked, but may significantly impact the understanding of relationship satisfaction. Many of the vignettes reported in Study 2 indicated that relationship satisfaction was influenced not only by perceptions of whether or not the partner provided certain behaviors that were linked with feeling loved, but also by perceptions of the partner providing behaviors that were linked with not feeling loved. This component is important to recognize because, although an individual may receive behaviors that are important to feel loved, the individual may also be receiving behaviors that result in feeling unloved. In such a case, an individual's

satisfaction could be diminished because of the latter component, despite receiving other behaviors indicative of love.

This dissertation may serve to inform practitioners about several aspects of the nature of developing dyadic relationships, particularly with regard to unmarried individuals in a romantic relationship. First, an individual's subjective sense of love is clinically significant in working with couples who report relationship dissatisfaction. This sense of love has been shown to be important in objective measures, in critical incidents affecting relationship satisfaction, and in the things that individuals generate as being important to them. In all senses this is an issue to which a clinician should attend. Clinicians need to be aware that the subjective experience of feeling loved by one's romantic partner is critical.

Second, there are specific overt loving behaviors that are desired by an individual that are observable, measurable, and identifiable. As such, they can be modified. Clinicians should focus on them in practice because of the established association between feelings of being loved by one's partner and relationship satisfaction.

Third, individuals have a conscious awareness of the behaviors that make them feel loved. Thus, it would be useful for clinicians to discuss these behaviors with them.

Fourth, if a clinician were to utilize one model when dealing with distressed relationships, either the model of desired loving behaviors or investment should be used rather than the equity model because they have been

shown to drive factors of love and satisfaction more readily than equity. Although equity is predictive of satisfaction, it is not as strongly predictive as the other two models and it is unrelated to the factor of love.

Fifth, because the loving behaviors can be recognized and modified by both partners in a relationship, an individual may be able to modify his/her own behavior to give the partner the desired loving behaviors that are important to him/her. An important clinical activity or behavioral intervention would be to decrease the discrepancy for the partner in order to increase satisfaction within the relationship.

Sixth, when discussing which behaviors to change, behaviors that are the most important in order to feel loved should be chosen because the behaviors that are linked with feeling loved have been shown to more powerfully influence relationship satisfaction than the ones that are not.

Finally, the DLBS, critical incident method, or free response questionnaire may even be utilized as tools to be administered to couples and shared in a counseling context to communicate specific behaviors that are desired from one another. As individuals or couples gain an understanding of what they and/or their partners want in order to feel loved, it seems that they may be more enabled to effect a change in the relationship to improve the level of satisfaction for themselves and their partners.

Conclusions

Consistent with conclusions in the published literature by Bierhoff (1991) and Hendrick and Hendrick (1997), participants linked love with satisfaction in all

three studies of this dissertation. Results also provide additional support for the model of receiving desired loving behaviors as proposed by Heesacker and Lawrence (1994) and Heesacker et al. (1998). This dissertation continues the progression of research involving the topic of desired loving behaviors by building on the work of Cawood and Heesacker (1999) and Samson (1996), in addition to the original studies.

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the experience of feeling loved as a moderator of the relationship between receiving desired loving behaviors and relationship satisfaction. The predictions in the dissertation were supported, suggesting that the degree to which a partner provides important desired loving behaviors is significantly and uniquely predictive of relationship satisfaction, and that receiving desired loving behaviors may serve to increase people's relationship satisfaction by increasing their sense of being loved. Furthermore, this model was found to account for at least as much of the variance in predicting relationship satisfaction as the investment and equity models. This finding supports the viability of the loving behavior model and underscores the importance of feeling loved in satisfying relationships.

Relationship satisfaction has been widely researched within a variety of theoretical frameworks. The findings of this dissertation may be utilized in future research on love and on relationship satisfaction. Additionally, the results may be useful to clinicians conducting individual, couple, and family therapy.

APPENDIX A
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **Sex:** 0=Female 1=Male

2. **Age:** _____

3. **Educational level attained:**
0=Less than one year of collegiate education
1=One year of collegiate education
2=Two years of collegiate education
3=Three years of collegiate education
4=Four years of collegiate education
5=More than four years of collegiate education

4. **Race:**
0=White (not Hispanic)
1=Black (not Hispanic)
2=Hispanic
3=Pacific Islander
4=American Indian
5=Alaskan Native
6=Other

5. **Marital Status:**
0=Never Married and Not Cohabiting
1=Married
2=Divorced
3=Separated
4=Cohabiting
5=Widowed

6. **Sexual Preference:**

0=Heterosexual

1=Homosexual

2=Bisexual

7. **Relationship Status:**

Are you currently involved in a romantic relationship?

0=No

1=Yes

8. **If you answered "No" to #7, how long ago did your most recent relationship end? _____**

9. **Length of Current or Most Recent Relationship: _____**

APPENDIX B
DISCREPANCY IN DESIRED LOVING BEHAVIORS SCALE

While considering your current relationship or while considering your most recent previous relationship, please answer the following questions. What do you want your partner to DO or SAY to make you feel loved?

USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO INDICATE HOW OFTEN YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR PARTNER TO DO OR SAY THE FOLLOWING THINGS IN ORDER FOR YOU TO FEEL LOVED.

0=NEVER 1=RARELY 2=SOMETIMES 3=OFTEN 4=ALWAYS

1. Tell me that I make them happier than anyone else.
2. Make our relationship a mutual project.
3. Say to me, "You mean so much to me."
4. Do my laundry every once in a while.
5. Tell me what he/she likes and dislikes in bed.
6. Put a note on my car.
7. Seduce me.
8. Be a good listener to me.
9. Spend time talking to me.
10. Leave a rose on my pillow.
11. Be open to trying new sexual positions.
12. Help me through rough times.
13. Be a good communicator.
14. Take a more active role in sex and foreplay.
15. Say that he/she wants to marry me.
16. Create a feeling of security between us.
17. Cook a special meal just for the two of us.
18. Say, "I love you with all my heart and soul."
19. Accept my imperfections.
20. Remember my birthday.
21. Good sex.
22. Say to me, "Let's make love."
23. Be supportive of me and my decisions.
24. Make a tape of corny love songs.
25. Talk about our future together.
26. Say to me, "I enjoy spending time with you more than any other person."

27. Say to me, "I want to be with you forever."
28. Take walks with me during the day.
29. Write poems.
30. Be sympathetic to my feelings.
31. Have sex in strange places.
32. Oral sex.
33. Make me cookies and brownies.
34. Encourage me to keep going during sex.
35. Say to me, "You are the best thing that ever happened to me."
36. Say to me, "I'll always love you."
37. Change his/her religion.
38. Say to me, "I think that we make a great couple."
39. Initiate sex.

READ THE SAME STATEMENTS AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME INDICATE HOW OFTEN YOUR PARTNER ACTUALLY DOES THE FOLLOWING:

0=NEVER 1=RARELY 2=SOMETIMES 3=OFTEN 4=ALWAYS

40. Tell me that I make them happier than anyone else.
41. Make our relationship a mutual project.
42. Say to me, "You mean so much to me."
43. Do my laundry every once in a while.
44. Tell me what he/she likes and dislikes in bed.
45. Put a note on my car.
46. Seduce me.
47. Be a good listener to me.
48. Spend time talking to me.
49. Leave a rose on my pillow.
50. Be open to trying new sexual positions.
51. Help me through rough times.
52. Be a good communicator.
53. Take a more active role in sex and foreplay.
54. Say that he/she wants to marry me.
55. Create a feeling of security between us.
56. Cook a special meal just for the two of us.
57. Say, "I love you with all my heart and soul."
58. Accept my imperfections.
59. Remember my birthday.
60. Good sex.
61. Say to me, "Let's make love."
62. Be supportive of me and my decisions.
63. Make a tape of corny love songs.
64. Talk about our future together.
65. Say to me, "I enjoy spending time with you more than any other person."
66. Say to me, "I want to be with you forever."

67. Take walks with me during the day.
68. Write poems.
69. Be sympathetic to my feelings.
70. Have sex in strange places.
71. Oral sex.
72. Make me cookies and brownies.
73. Encourage me to keep going during sex.
74. Say to me, "You are the best thing that ever happened to me."
75. Say to me, "I'll always love you."
76. Change his/her religion.
77. Say to me, "I think that we make a great couple."
78. Initiate sex.

APPENDIX C

MEASURE OF EQUITY/INEQUITY

While considering your current relationship or while considering your most recent previous relationship, please answer the following questions.

1. Considering what you put into your relationship compared to what you get out of it and what your partner puts in compared to what he or she gets out of it, how does your relationship "stack up"?

- 0 = I am getting a much better deal than my partner.
- 1 = I am getting a somewhat better deal.
- 2 = I am getting a slightly better deal.
- 3 = We are both getting an equally good (or bad) deal.
- 4 = My partner is getting a slightly better deal.
- 5 = My partner is getting a somewhat better deal.
- 6 = My partner is getting a much better deal than I.

2. Sometimes things get out of balance in a relationship and one partner contributes more to the relationship than the other. Consider all the times when the exchange in your relationship has become unbalanced and one partner contributed more than the other for a time. When your relationship becomes unbalanced, which of you is more likely to be the one who contributes more?

- 0 = My partner is much more likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 1 = My partner is somewhat more likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 2 = My partner is slightly more likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 3 = We are equally likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 4 = I am slightly more likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 5 = I am somewhat more likely to be the one to contribute more.
- 6 = I am much more likely to be the one to contribute more.

APPENDIX D MEASURE OF INVESTMENT SIZE

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each of the following statements regarding your current or most recent relationship.

0=Don't Agree At All 1=Agree Slightly 2=Agree Moderately 3=Agree Completely

1. I have invested a great deal of time in our relationship.
2. I have told my partner many private things about myself (I disclose secrets to him/her).
3. My partner and I have an intellectual life together that would be difficult to replace.
4. My sense of personal identity (who I am) is linked to my partner and our relationship.
5. My partner and I share many memories.

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each of the following statements regarding your current or most recent relationship.

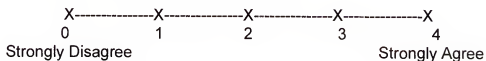
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree				Agree				Agree
At All				Somewhat				Completely

6. I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end.
7. Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities, etc.), and I would lose all of this if we were to break up.
8. I feel very involved in our relationship - like I have put a great deal into it.
9. My relationships with friends and family members would be complicated if my partner and I were to break up (e.g., partner is friends with people I care about).
10. Compared to other people I know, I have invested a great deal in my relationship with my partner.

APPENDIX E

GENERIC MEASURE OF FEELING LOVED

For each item, please mark on the answer sheet the number (0-4) that best reflects your current or most recent relationship:

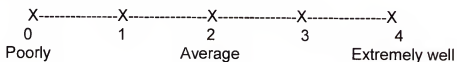


1. I feel loved by my partner.
2. I would characterize my relationship as a loving one.
3. When I think of my partner, I feel loved.
4. I have no doubts that my partner loves me.
5. Nobody else loves me the way my partner does.

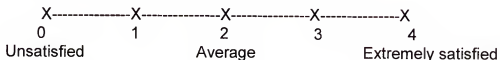
APPENDIX F
RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT SCALE

For the romantic relationship that you have already been describing, please mark on the answer sheet the number (0-4) for each item which best answers that question for you:

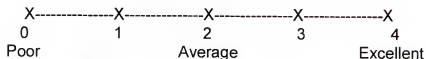
1. How well does your partner meet your needs?



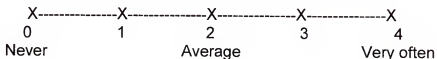
2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?



3. How good is your relationship compared to most?



4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?



APPENDIX G
RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION
CRITICAL INCIDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

I would like for you to think of times when your romantic partner in your current or most recent romantic relationship did or said something that strongly influenced your sense of relationship satisfaction in either a positive or a negative way. Then, think about why what was done or said influenced your sense of relationship satisfaction. As you are trying to recall such incidents, please focus on incidents that significantly affected your sense of relationship satisfaction and happiness. Focus on incidents that you can remember vividly.

An example of an incident that enhanced relationship satisfaction might be:

"Two weeks ago my grandfather passed away. Even though I've only been dating my girlfriend for three months, she comforted me when I was in need and came to the funeral with me. It increased my satisfaction with the relationship because she is obviously putting as much into our relationship as I am."

An example of an incident that diminished relationship satisfaction might be:

"Last week I found out that I got into graduate school in Texas. I wasn't sure whether my boyfriend and I would stay together because I knew I would be moving and that he would be staying in Gainesville. When I brought up the subject with him, he said that we should see other people and maybe try to keep in touch. It really hurt me and made me feel unhappy with the relationship because I realized that he wasn't invested in our relationship."

Now, on this page please:

A. DESCRIBE three incidents, as you remember them, that affected your satisfaction in your romantic relationship.

B. IMMEDIATELY AFTER DESCRIBING AN INCIDENT TELL WHY each incident affected your relationship satisfaction.

C. Tell HOW LONG AGO this incident occurred.

#1.

A. Describe the incident that affected your relationship satisfaction:

B. Why did it affect your level of relationship satisfaction? _____

C. How long ago did this incident occur? _____

#2.

A. Describe the incident that affected your relationship satisfaction:

B. Why did it affect your level of relationship satisfaction? _____

C. How long ago did this incident occur? _____

If up to this point you have described negative incidents, please describe a positive incident. Or, if you have described positive incidents, please describe a negative incident.

#3.

A. Describe the incident that affected your relationship satisfaction:

B. Why did it affect your level of relationship satisfaction? _____

C. How long ago did this incident occur? _____

APPENDIX H
FREE RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE

I am doing a survey related to the topics of love and relationship satisfaction. Please answer the questions below with as many specific examples as you can think of.

#1 What do you want your partner to DO to make you feel loved?

#2 What do you want your partner to SAY to make you feel loved?

For each response you just listed, please go back and next to it indicate from 0 to 4 HOW IMPORTANT that item is for you to FEEL LOVED.

0=Not at all important 1=Not very important 2=Somewhat important
3=important 4=Very important

Now go back again and for each response you listed, please indicate on a scale of 0 to 4 HOW MUCH YOU RECEIVE that item from your partner.

0=Never 1=Not enough 2=Just enough 3=A little too much 4=Far too much

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Cristina M. Mejia-Millan was born in St. Petersburg, Florida, on March 20, 1973. After graduating from St. Petersburg High School in 1991, she enrolled in the University of Florida, where she received her bachelor of science with honors degree in December 1994. In August 1995, she entered the counseling psychology program at the University of Florida, where she received her master of science degree in May 1997. She is currently doing her internship in Clinical Psychology at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center in Miami, Florida. She will receive her doctor of philosophy degree in August 2000.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Martin Heesacker, Chair
Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



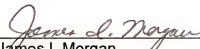
Dorothy D. Nevill
Professor of Psychology

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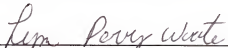
Margaret M. Bradley
Associate Scientist of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



James I. Morgan
Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Lynn Perry Wooten
Assistant Professor of Management

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August 2000

Dean, Graduate School